



An Apostle of Love

"Let the entire body of the faithful pour forth persevering prayer to the Mother of God and Mother of [humanity]. Let them implore that she who aided the beginnings of the Church by her prayers may now, exalted as she is in heaven above all the saints and angels, intercede with her Son in the fellowship of all the saints."

– Vatican II, Constitution on the Church, 1964:69.

In today's first reading, we immediately think Mary is the woman referred to in the verses.

In her own right, Mary was a faithful Jew, obedient and awaiting the coming of the Messiah, formed by her community and nurtured by its teachings.

A later verse (Rev. 12:17) would allude to her other descendants, who would "keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus". This woman also portrays a dimension of Mary as the "new Israel" who, moved by their faith to be true to the Holy Spirit, goes beyond the "old Israel" that had been the cradle of her faith.

Let us not forget her assent to God, her unconditional "yes", had led her down a path she would never have imagined, and indeed, they were pretty dramatic at times, as you can recall of Jesus' birth, death and resurrection. Yet she persevered, keeping true to the Spirit of God, for she "is blessed among women".

The pivot of her life is God which then leads to the birth of her son, Jesus. The arrival of a newborn infant often involves monumental changes. Mary was said to have pondered on the words of Simeon and Anna. In faith, Mary witnessed all that was to happen. Did her faith waver? Challenged, no doubt,

as would any parent if their child suffered as much as Jesus did.

The Assumption of Mary into heaven is not without precedent. Elijah was taken up into heaven (2 Kings 2:1-18). God's interest in humanity is so great that beyond a traditional theophany, a tangible manifestation of God's presence, Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. The dynamic of such actions by God is underpinned by God's love for us. What does such love mean?

Mary and Elizabeth in the Gospel reading underline that faith is intricately tied to love. Elizabeth can only bear such honest witness to Mary because her faith was strong, her heart was open, and more importantly, infused with love that she had for Mary. Her witnessing foreshadowed the outpouring of love at Jesus' impending birth by the choirs of angels and the Magi's homage. In reply, Mary acknowledged the changes that had happened to her and professed her love for God, acclaiming his love and mercy for his people, especially those most in need. In doing so, Mary personifies the new Israel, demonstrating faith, and more importantly, love of God, by professing confidence in and knowledge of Him.

With love, anything is possible; actions undertaken or endured for the sake of love. These acts or events need not always be of suffering or of heavy portent. Remember how Jesus replied to a woman heckler that the blessed are those who hear and keep the Word of God? Imagine that happening during a Sunday homily. Or what about the time at Cana when water was turned into wine?

The interaction between Elizabeth and Mary was not only inspired by the Holy Spirit, but more importantly reflects a love between them. For did not Mary willingly go to Elizabeth to help her with her pregnancy, to be with her in her time of need. Mary, who understands and expresses love, surely will know how we in turn need God's love. Not surprisingly, the Catholic Church encourages us to present our prayers to Mary so that she can intercede on our behalf.

Beyond prayer and witnessing, as a true disciple of love, Mary knows the importance of mission, of taking action. Undertaking a journey in the beginning of her own pregnancy to help another underlies how mission is more than mere words. Despite the shame and suffering of Jesus on the cross, she remained close and

risked being associated with Jesus – that is how strong and fearless her love is.

We don't know much about Mary's life, but the Church assures us of her faith. Trust that her love, as demonstrably strong, caring and thoughtful, will continue to be inspired by the Holy Spirit and that so aided, God will answer us in our time of need as we present our prayers in these uncertain times.

MICHAEL PHUNG, SJ

hit" — how the "cannonballs" she faced brought her to a deeper relationship with the God of Love. This **Wednesday, 18 August at 8pm**. Email us at cpq.cosi@gmail.com for details.

IGNATIUS YEAR BOOKMARKS

This weekend sees the distribution of **Bookmark #2** out of a series of 6 bookmarks that the Jesuits of Malaysia and Singapore have printed as part of the Ignatian Year celebration. Do collect them all!



PRAYER & INTERCESSORY GROUPS ADVISORY

We have learned that some prayer groups from our parish, who have been praying for the students & families of the recent River Valley High School tragedy, have included the names of the children concerned. **This violates the law under the Children and Young Persons Act.** While the family appreciates your prayers and support, we would like to remind everyone to not mention the names of the children from hereon.

Kindly treat this matter seriously as we have received complaints from friends of the family.



CATHOLIC200SG MERCHANDISE

In support of Catholic200SG, our church is collating orders for the **Catholic200SG Souvenirs** as a parish. Collection will be made available from the Parish Office for orders made through our church order form. Place your orders at form.jotform.com/212120506058443 by **Friday, 20 August**.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to coming together to Ignite and Shine with Faith.

PARISH NEWS

AUGUST MASS BOOKINGS

Stage 4 Mass bookings for August opens on **17 August 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.

Please take note that we will be increasing our Mass Capacity to **170pax** for the following Masses from next weekend onwards: **Saturday 6pm & Sunday 12.15pm**

Children aged 12 years and below may also participate in Pre-Event Testing (PET) or Vaccinated-only Masses. Read the full details at <https://www.catholic.sg/resumption-of-mass37/>

LIVESTREAM MASSES are available on the following days: Mondays - Fridays, 7.00pm. Saturday 6.00pm, Sunday 8.15am, 10.15am, 12.15pm and 6.00pm. Please go to bit.ly/stigslivestream

ADULT CONFIRMATION PROGRAMME

Last call to register for the Adult Confirmation Programme! If you are or know of any adult who has been baptised and wish to be confirmed in the Catholic faith, this is the chance to do so.

The programme comprises 6 preparatory sessions starting from **9 October 2021, every Saturday, 10.00-11.30am**. The confirmation Mass will be held on **Saturday, 20 November 2021 at 2.00pm**.

Register at <https://forms.gle/ZF8iH759Bqqcdgt8A> latest by **16 August**.

CHARISMATIC RENEWAL COMMUNITY

Come join us for a sharing by one of our sisters entitled, *"Falling in love with God after the cannonballs"*

Fr Colin Tan, SJ Parish Priest * Fr Gregory Tan, 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

ARCHDIOCESAN NEWS

GIFT CONTRIBUTIONS

This weekend is the collection for the **GIFT (Giving in Faith and Thankfulness)** programme to build a more vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church. Sign up for a monthly pledge, the most sustainable source of funding for the archdiocese, to support its organisations and projects. Or give regularly via **PayNow to 201231391K** (include name and mobile no. or email). GIFT envelopes can be dropped into the Mass offering box. More info at catholicfoundation.sg

MY PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS 2021

Are there universal moral principles that can help human societies progress even at a time of great change like today? In this module on **"Christians in the Social Community"**, we will look at how the Church's social teachings can be applied to a wide range of issues including fair wage, private property, political rules of engagement, the nature of business and economy, and other important social problems.

Module 5 will start on **19 August 2021** and will be held weekly on **Thursdays over Zoom at 7.30pm** for seven weeks. Register at <https://bit.ly/3xwb4cV>

For enquiries, please email Caritas Singapore at mPMC@caritas-singapore.org

MY PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS 2021

Module 5
Christians in the Social Community

19 Aug to 6 Oct (Thurs), 7.30pm

Sessions are conducted via Zoom Live. Scan the QR code or visit <https://bit.ly/3xwb4cV> to register. Contribution: \$70.00



CBN CONNECT MUSIC & ARTS SERIES

Catholic Business Network is pleased to announce our inaugural Connect Series for the Music and Arts Industry featuring singer-songwriter Corrinne May. Come and hear Corrinne share about her experiences and blessings in her journey of music.

Saturday, 21 August 2021, 10am-12pm via Zoom. Register at bit.ly/CBNConnectMusicArts

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR 2021

24 September - 26 November 2021

Encounter

"To know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." - Ephesians 3:19

Do you desire a new life in the Holy Spirit?

Join us in the Life in the Spirit Seminar (LISS) - a series of 10 weekly sessions of hybrid online Zoom and in-person sessions held from 24 September till 26 November. Includes live praise and worship, talk and small group discussions. Seats are limited.

Sign up now at tinyurl.com/saccreliss21sg

Organised by: sacre

Scan to register:

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