

When you're rotten about yourself, you become rotten to everyone else, even those you love.

I had no one to talk me out of my despair, and that was a mistake.

You need to keep people close. You need to give them access to your heart. (extracted from For One More Day).

My greatest take from this novel is the importance of being able to forgive yourself.

Charley Benetto adores his father since young, only to see him leaving his mother when Charley is on the verge of adolescence. With regards to baseball, Charley is as passionate as his father.

Years later, after Charley is married, on his mother's seventy-ninth birthday, his father calls him to invite him to play in an Old Timers game. Though Charley is a bit hesitant to accept the offer, he cannot bear to reject his Dad; so he fakes an excuse, lies to his mother, wife and daughter and flies off. As he is reminiscing the glory of his days as a young energetic baseball player while swinging his bat, his mother collapsed at his hometown due to a massive heart attack. Charley thus misses the only opportunity to bid farewell to his mother. As he drives home through the night, he is tormented more by guilt than by shock and grief. Since then, his life has been destroyed by alcohol and regret. He loses his job. He leaves his family. He hits rock bottom after discovering that he won't be invited to his only daughter's wedding, and this is the most crucial thing that drives him to commit suicide.

Sunset Mass

5.30pm

Rosary

4.40pm

Sunday Masses

8.30am (Mandarin)

11.00am (English)

2.00pm (Cantonese) Chapel, 3rd Floor

4.20pm (English)

Weekday Masses

7.20am

5.30pm

Intercessory Prayer

7.15pm (Eng, Thu, Adoration Chapel)

Infant Jesus Devotions

5.30pm (Thu, followed by Mass)

4.00pm (Sun, followed by Mass)

Divine Mercy Devotions

Fri, after 5.30pm Mass

Sun, 12.30pm (Mandarin)

Clearly, as Charley cannot let go of the immense guilt deeply engraved in his heart due to his irrevocable decision, he submits himself to alcohol and his relationships with his loved ones inevitably deteriorates. He does not confide to his loved ones anymore and becomes "ornery and distant". He imagines himself suffering all alone. He shuts everybody out from his own world until he meets his dead mother...

It is a well-known fact that hurting people hurt others. The longer you avoid forgiving yourself, the longer you allow yourself to harbor the feelings that you deserve to suffer for what you did, the more explosive you will become and, therefore, the more apt you are to hurt others. (extracted from <http://www.allaboutgod.com/forgiving-yourself.htm>)

Personally, I had been through this experience before. The feeling was terrible once I realized that I had vented my frustration on another group of innocent pupils. I resolved this problem by confessing my sin to God and asking God to teach me how to be a firmer and more righteous teacher. After that, the healing gradually took place and I have never since repeated that mistake again.

Teaching is a life-giving career. If we persistently dwell on our sins and cannot forgive ourselves, then we are robbing ourselves of the opportunity to learn from our mistakes and to move on with life and with God. How can we then overcome our obstacles when we are stuck in our misery? How can we then encourage our students to stretch their limits when we already believe that it is impossible for us to impact others?

Forgive yourself. Let go of whatever you are holding against yourself. You can let the healing begin...

Sion Adorers - Holy Hour

7.45pm - 8.45pm (Sat, Adoration Chapel)

Hour of Mercy (Adoration Chapel)

3.00pm (Daily)

Counselling at SPP

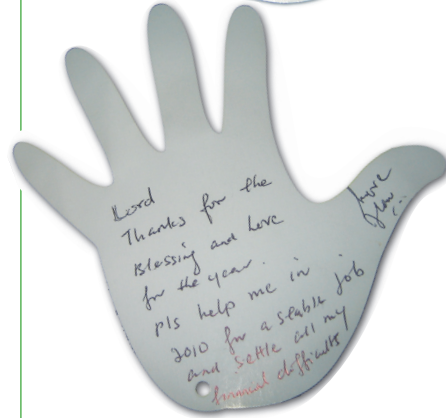
Family Life Society Counselling every Monday 11.00am - 2.00pm and 6.30pm - 9.00pm. Call 6382 0688 for appointment

Church of Saints Peter & Paul

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www.sppchurch.org.sg

We welcome literary contributions to The Apostles. Please email your submission to spptheapostles@gmail.com. You can also download The Apostles at: <http://sppchurch.org.sg/downloads.html>

Thanksgiving...



We welcome literary contributions to our weekly newsletter (articles, observations, book reviews, etc). Please email your submissions to spptheapostles@gmail.com. Include a short introduction of yourself to our readers. Thank you.

Parish Priest

Rev Fr Anselm Phang OCD

Asst Parish Priest

Rev Fr Joseph Koh OCD

Provincial-Delegate

Rev Fr Thomas Lim OCD

Parish Secretary

Ms Martha Loh, Ms Jannie Lui

Church Donations

Please make you cheque payable to :

(i) **Church Of Sts Peter & Paul** -for contributions/donations for on-going maintenance of our Church or parish projects and Mass offerings;

(ii) **Church Of SPP Building Fund** - for contributions/donations to our Church building fund;

(iii) **Carmelite Fathers** for contributions/donations to the Carmelite Friars (SPP), OCD Missions, Frairs Formation.

Information is correct at time of publication.



the apostles
Church of Saints Peter and Paul

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

31 January 2010 Year C

Dead to our Old selves

- written by Y.C. Tan

An elderly priest was talking to a group of young children on the importance of good behaviour, sacraments of baptism, sacraments of reconciliation and going to heaven. At the end of his talk, the priest announced that he would give some beautiful stars to anyone who could answer his questions properly. So, the elderly priest began with his first question, "Where do you want to go?" Instantaneously, Little Jenny shouted, "Go to heaven! Heaven!" The happy priest nodded and gave Little Jenny a beautiful star and continued with his next question, "What do you have to be to get to heaven?" "Good behaviour!" yelled Little Tommy. "Baptism!" shouted Little Sally excitedly. "Confession!" Little Jerry yelled at the top of his lungs. The beaming priest gave Little Tommy, Little Sally and Little Jerry some beautiful stars. However, before the priest could proceed with the next question, Little Johnny suddenly stood up and cried, "Father! Tommy, Sally and Jerry shouldn't get the stars!" The elderly priest was puzzled. "We must be dead before we could go to heaven!" cried Little Johnny.

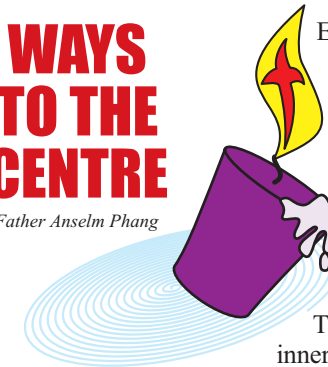
Prior to my RCIA journey, I thought that simply good behaviour, doing some good deeds, going to church on Sundays and paying lips service that I believe in God is a guaranteed ticket to salvation (to be born again) and heaven. Even so, I was wrong.

"But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because He was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which He has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our Saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by His grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life." (Titus 3:4-7) After the Homily

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WAYS TO THE CENTRE

Father Anselm Phang



Educational institutions school their students in many ways but I wonder if they are taught what I consider to be three of the most important things in life: how to make friends; how to plan financially; and how to seek union with God. With frequent news of how people got tanked from relationship problems and financial difficulties, it is wise to focus on the third life skill of seeking union with God. I consider this as the Number One Education.

To enroll for this course, we need to begin with our inner child. The Lord affirms us, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you." (Jeremiah 1:5)

We have to remember the fact that the Lord loves us and desires to be with us. We also have to remind ourselves that we have our origins in God. "Everything has its origin in God's love, everything is shaped by it, everything is directed towards it." (Pope Benedict XVI Deus Caritas Est) This simple truth is so important. Many squander their lives away thinking no one in the world loves them. They are so wrong.

"One of the deepest forms of poverty a person can experience is isolation. Poverty is often produces by a rejection of God's love, by man's basic and tragic tendency to close in on himself, thinking himself to be self-sufficient or merely an insignificant and ephemeral fact, a 'stranger' in a random universe. It is not by isolation that man establishes his worth, but by placing himself in relation with others and with God. Hence these relations take on fundamental importance." (Pope Benedict XVI Caritas in Veritate). It is true that God thinks highly of us. So precious are we to him that he has plans for us. If we reflect on his love for us, we will know what these plans are. Many people wonder why their lives go round in circles (good cycles or vicious cycles). This is because they never reflect. If they have experienced something (good or bad) and if they then reflect on where God is in this event or place or person; then they would be able to glean the gems of wisdom from it and accelerate their learning curve.

The prophet Jeremiah shows us the way but it is God who leads us there. And He leads us there by example. Even Jesus was rejected by his own people. "And he said, 'Amen, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own native place.'" (Luke 4:24) Just as God has already known you; and he has already consecrated you; and he has already chosen you; hence you would be serving the Lord and certainly not without suffering. Ouch!

"But do you gird your loins; stand up and tell them all that I command you. Be not crushed on their account, as though I would leave you crushed before them; for it is I this day who have made you a fortified city, a pillar of iron, a wall of brass, against the whole land: against Judah's kings and princes, against its priests and people. They will fight against you but not prevail over you, for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD." (Jeremiah 1:17-19)

This is the way, the more excellent way prescribed by Paul to the Corinthians. Jesus walked this way. So did Paul. This is the way of love. When we actualize love in our relationships with God and our neighbours, this is the centre. Jesus models for us through his obedience to the Father, let us centre on him throughout the way to God.

YEAR FOR PRIESTS: 2009-2010 Let us remember and pray for all our priests during this holy year. **SPP Divine Mercy Prayer Group** will be offering prayers for priests every 1st Friday at 3 pm in the Adoration Room. **SPP Prayer Group** is also conducting a prayer session for priests & religious and for more priestly and religious vocations on the last Thursday of each month from 7.15 pm to 9.00 pm with half hour of Praise and Adoration and Repentance in the Adoration Room.

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (31 JANUARY 2010)

READINGS: Sunday Missal (Year C): Page 249
Responsorial Psalm: "My lips will tell of your help."
Prayers of the Faithful: Page 252

Readings for the Week:
Mon 25 Jan – Sat 30 Jan '10
Mon : 2 Sam 15:13-14,30; 16: 5-31/Mk 5: 1-20
Tue : Presentation of the Lord – Mal 3:1-4/Lk 2:22-40
Wed : 2 Sam 24: 2,9-17/Mk 6: 1-6
Thu : 1 Kgs 2: 1-4,10-12/Mk 6: 7-13
Fri : Sir 47: 2-13/Mk 6: 14-29
Sat : 1 Kgs 3: 4-13/Mk 6: 30-34

REFLECTION

"Today these words come true even as you listened" - Imagine what each of us would feel if he heard this. Some of us might believe immediately, some might have doubts and others might totally reject these words, as they might think they know where Jesus is from. But with God, only His Plan is the Way, and notwithstanding man's different reactions, Jesus is "officially" starting His Mission. Apart from the need to be attentive and receptive to God's message when it comes (eg Jesus' proclamation in the synagogue or his message in the priest's sermon etc), this week's passage also brings to mind the need to correct our wrong inclinations to think things foreign are "better" than ones that are local. "No prophet is honored in his own country", "Who is this but Joseph's son?" - are all but examples of failures by the Jews to recognize that one of their own can be the Chosen One or their Teacher. Let us pray for God's graces to be able to accept that God's benefits are shared by all (and here I really mean by all, that is other persons/communities/nationalities/faiths), and not be like the Jews that thought God's favours are limited to themselves alone. Let us also pray for the grace of self worth, starting in our individuals and thereafter our community/society, a very important value where we as Catholics can help to encourage and instill. - *Lectors Ministry*

The Word - Spiritual Foundation of Our Health

Kenosis Living Spring (Wendy Yeo - Herbalist)

"I am Yahweh your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no gods except me. You shall not make yourself a carved image or any likeness of anything in heaven above or on earth beneath or in the waters under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God and I punish the fathers' fault in the sons, the grandsons and the great-grandsons of those who hate me; but I show kindness to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments." - (Deut. 5: 6-10)

The Need to Look Inside Ourselves

By describing disease as only relating to the physical body, the conventional medical model has distracted the thoughts of people from the possible spiritual origin of disease, and has created fear that only drugs and other intervention can help. When medical treatment alone is apparently successful, it can be nothing more than a temporary fix unless the real non-physical, spiritual cause has been removed.

Since the body is the Barometer of the Soul, we need to look into ourselves when we have an ailment of any kind. Many diseases are directly related to or caused by stress, anger, suppressed hostilities and resentments. We must not wait until we are desperate or nearly dying. If we take a look and work out

what we are doing to cause us a small ailment, then it could stop a big ailment building up in the future.

The Need to Change Ourselves First

Remember we are never too old to change. Constant change is the only stable condition of life. To change the world, you must change yourself first. To help the world, you must help yourself first. To understand the world, you must understand yourself first.

We are no better or no lesser than anyone. Do the best you can. Grow from everything you do. To be happy, a soul needs to be involved and be creative so it can keep learning and growing and changing.

The Need for Spiritual Wellness

The quality of our life depends on the quality of our thinking and our thinking can be affected by our feelings. Negative people are charged with even more negativity and it accentuates their own negativity. They do not realise that their negativity attracts more negativity so their situation gets out of hand. This is where the word "LUNATIC" comes from. (It is said that when there is a full moon, we get both a full charge of negativity from the moon and also a full charge of positivity from the sun because it is fully reflected off the moon)

Everybody on earth today is responsible for the state of the Planet and for the situation they are in. Everyone of us must have a direction in life - spiritual direction

AN APPEAL FOR HAITI

The recent earthquake in Haiti has caused massive destruction and loss of human life. To date the death toll is estimated to exceed 70,000 and it continues to rise. Catholic Relief Services (CRS), a member of Caritas Internationalis (CI) is coordinating much of the Church's response to this disaster. The Archdiocesan Crisis Coordination Team (ACCT) in Singapore is working with CI and CRS to provide financial support from its Disaster Aid fund. **Those who wish to donate to the Fund can send a crossed cheque made payable to "Disaster Aid Fund" to: ACCT (Attn: Jerry Ow), 2 Highland Road LG-01, Singapore 549102.** Let us pray in solidarity and offer our financial help for all those who have been displaced and are much in need.

not material direction. A lot of people do not give a thought to what life is all about, most are too busy going after material possession.

The way we keep being controlled by material possessions, power-hungry behaviour and most of all being judgemental and give not a thought to our spiritual nature and the reasons we are here on this Planet, we are heading for danger! If we all had the quality of our lives as our first priority, the Earth would not be in this condition today!

Spiritual wellness involves connecting with the bigger picture as you search for meaning and purpose in your life. Concepts including non-judgement, discipline, conscientiousness, selflessness and other actions that increase our own sense of inner peace as well as peace with the world around us. The Creator God wants us to keep from being fearful and judgemental. These limitations keep us negative and out of balance with a lack of inner authority and never knowing who we are.

It is only when we based our meaning and purpose in life on the unfailing World of God can we not only have godly discernment but also divine health.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the deadly pestilence." (Psalm 91)

Events in our Parish

CARMELITE LENTEN RETREAT 2010 - We invite you to "ENTER THE CLOISTER" in this year's retreat, 26 - 28 Feb. The cost is **SS\$150/** pax, twin sharing at Montfort Centre. Please register early with the SPP Secretariat. **We apologise for last week error. It should be SS\$150.00 and NOT SS\$120.00**

SOLEMN PROFESSION - We are very happy to announce our Church of Sts Peter and Paul will be celebrating the Solemn Profession of Friar Paul of Christ Crucified, OCD (Anuphong Srisuk) and the Silver Jubilee of Religious Profession of Friar Joseph Koh of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, OCD at 6.30 pm on Fri 19 Mar '10. The Solemnity of St Joseph Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Principal Protector of the Carmelite Order.

DIACONATE ORDINATION - We warmly welcome His Grace, Archbishop Nicholas Chia, DD. Archbishop of Singapore who will be present in our Church of Sts. Peter and Paul on Thu 25 Mar '10, The Solemnity the Annunciation of the Lord, at 6.30pm to preside in the Diaconate Ordination of Friar Paul Anuphong Srisuk, OCD.

MASS FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED will be held on Fri 29 Jan '10 at 5.30 pm.

CCD - No CCD classes on 14 & 21 Feb '10 due to Chinese New Year celebration.

LUNAR NEW YEAR - Falls on a Sunday, Mass times in our SPP Church will be as for normal weekend. Please note -NO evening Masses on Mon 15 Jan and Tue 16 Jan '10 (PH). The morning Mass will be as usual at 7.20 am.

ASH WEDNESDAY - The Blessing and Imposition of Ashes will be held on 17 Feb '10 at 7.20 am (Eng), 6.00 pm (Mandarin) and 8.00 pm (Eng).

BLESSING OF CANDLES - The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord falls on Tue 2 Feb 2010. There will be the blessing of candles at all masses. The World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life is also celebrated on that day.

ASSISI HOSPICE CHARITY - The Assisi Team will be at our SPP Church to sell Assisi Hospice Charity Fun Day tickets on the following days:
- Thu 4 Feb at 5.30 pm IJ Novena and Mass
- Sat 6 Feb at 5.30 pm Sunset Mass
- Sun 7 Feb at morning Masses only

THE GREAT ST JOSEPH FOOD & FUNFAIR - Volunteers from St Joseph's Church (Upper Bukit Timah) will be visiting our SPP Church at our weekend

masses on 27 & 28 Feb 10 to sell tickets for their Food & Fun Fair.

MONTHLY PRAYER FOR CMs, Mon 1 Feb 2010. All are welcome.

DAILY PRAYER - Our SPP Church prays the Lauds led by the Carmelite Friars every weekday morning after the 7.20 am Mass.

COUNSELLING SERVICES - Family Life Society (FLS) is making its counselling services available at our SPP Church every Monday from 11.00 am to 2.00 pm and from 6.30 pm to 9.00 pm. Lay Counsellors trained by FLS will be available to provide a listening ear and help to those in need. Parishioners may call 6382 0688 (weekdays from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm) to make an appointment. Website: <http://www.familylife.sg/>

Events around our Parish

PLEASE LET ME PLAY - ENTERING THE WORLD OF VIDEO GAMES. Video games are very much a part of our lives. This talk will focus on one of the major concerns of video games - addiction! As part of the MediaMatters@CANA series to address the meaning and influence of media to Catholics, CANA has invited Dr Angeline Khoo to talk to parents, catechists, youth leaders, etc. Join us Fri 5 Feb 10, 7.30 pm, CANA The Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo Street, 2nd Floor. Contribution: \$10 Registration: cana@catholiccentre.com.sg or call 63364815 /63364467

WORLD DAY OF CONSECRATED LIFE - An Eucharistic Celebration commemorating "World Day Of Consecrated Life" will be held on Tue 2 Feb 2010 at 6:30 pm at Novena Church, Thomson Road. The main celebrant will be His Grace Archbishop Nicholas Chia and the homily will be delivered by Fr Patrick Massang, CSsR.

BIBLE CONVENTION (MALAYA LAM) - Attend a 4-day Bible Convention (in Malayalam) and Retreats for Teenagers & Children (Eng) on Feb 13, 14, 15 & 16 from 8.30 am to 6.00 pm at St Anthony's Primary School, 1 Bukit Batok Street 34. The Bible Convention is led by Fr Saviour Khan Vattayil from Sehion Retreat Center, Kerala. For registration, contact: Bible Convention - Roby 9835 4915 / Shibu 9387 9192; Children's retreat in ENGLISH - Tony 9474 6193; Teen's Retreat in ENGLISH - Shimy 9648 5801. Organised by Malayalam Charismatic Group affiliated to SACCRE.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE (MPC) - For couples intending to get married - 1st Quarter Course starts 28 Feb 2010. Allocation of places is on a first-come-first-served basis. Application forms obtainable in church office or website: www.catholic.org.sg/mpc Enquiries: John & Joan @ 9848-2864 or email: marthasohsk@yahoo.com.

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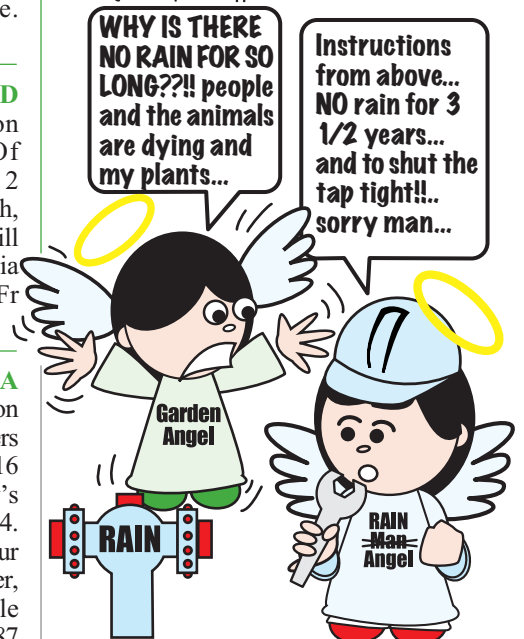
of the Baptism of the Lord and Breaking of Word, I was sure that there's still something missing from my previous equation to salvation and that is - Baptism! It's only in the waters of baptism then we'll be sanctified, dead in our old selves, reborn and rejuvenated spiritually, in hope of eternal life in Christ our Lord! Through Baptism, we would also receive the Holy Spirit, other sacraments; become part of God's family and church.

So, are we guaranteed eternal life after baptism? The bad news is "No" as I've gathered that we could lose the grace by committing a mortal sin. However, the good news is our loving God will give us a chance to get back our grace through sacramental confession. Praise the Lord!

Looking at the calendar on the table, the Catechumens' baptism is just a couple of months away - it's the day that I've been looking forward to be 'dead to my old self' and the day that all the Catechumens are looking forward to be 'born again and doing our best to live in His grace for the rest of our faith journey!

The Lighter side of The Apostles

the beagle with yellow slippers



Luke 4:25-30 I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed - only Naaman the Syrian." All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.