

Thanksgiving...

Gabriel Tee (Aspiring Catechist)

I just got back my results on Monday, and I was both surprised and happy. I got 6 As - 9 points for my O levels. Just what I had prayed and hoped for.

Now thinking back, just a few months ago, I was very lazy, and I didn't bother to study that much, but God has blessed me with this group of friends who would come together and study after mass on Sundays and on the weekdays too. I am really thankful for that, as without them, I wouldn't have been able to do well for this examination, and without God, I wouldn't have friends like them.

There were also times when I got very lazy and I didn't feel like studying at all, but there was always this voice in my head telling me to study. Also, when I got on the computer, I would always feel very guilty about not studying, and because of this I would not play any games and go back to studying. Thinking about it now, I realised that this was all God's doing, and I am very thankful of that. There were also times where I felt very sad, demoralised, frustrated or like I was inferior to others, I would play a Praise and Worship song and just sing along to it or meditate in silence, and somehow it always calms me down. I am always able to find peace in God.

I am also thankful for my Dad, who have always found time off his hectic schedule to help me with any problems I was facing as well as supporting me in my studies and my friends, Jason, Marcus, Brian, who were always there for me when I needed someone to talk to about my problems.

2 Corinthians 9:15 – "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!"

GOD BLESS YOU ON YOUR 'O' LEVEL RESULTS - SPP wish to congratulate all students who have received their results. We pray you will get into the institution of higher learning and course of your choice. God bless you all.

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)

Kids Corner - Jesus read a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. What were the things that Isaiah was sent to do? Join the two related boxes together.

Proclaim

Good News

Liberty

Sight

Freedom

Blind 

Lord's year of favour

Downtrodden

Poor

Captives

Luke 4:16-21 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

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Him in Reflection & Healing, sharing a meal, sharing hopes and joy, contributing

and offering gifts and talents making the dinner and countdown event possible and even simple cheering.

In the same way, we're all magi from all walks of life and all over the world, with different talents, gifts and having something to offer. We are all making our journey toward a place of promise, direct by an everlasting light that assures us that if we follow it all the way, no matter how outlandish the road or unfamiliar the place, we will never be lost.

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.

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

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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>

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.



A community of people motivated by God is an extraordinary organism of growth. When this community is fired up by passion and commitment, that growth is life transforming and life giving. Unencumbered, this body of oneness can achieve great things for God's reign on earth. Community building is an expansive art. This process requires a keen balance of: knowledge of God's will; reading and interpreting the signs of the times; thorough understanding of God's word; and actualization of the insights gained through holistic living in the Spirit of Jesus. However, there can be obstacles that stunt its growth. The root of these obstacles is the lack of the knowledge of God's will.

"People perish for want of knowledge." (Hosea 4:6)

We can contrast this quote with our First Reading from Nehemiah 8: 2-4, 5-6, 8-10. How the word touches the hearts of people. When the Word of God is read; interpreted; explained; and understood, the people cried their hearts out. Tears welled up in their eyes when they heard how God loves them.

"Today is holy to the LORD your God. Do not be sad, and do not weep" - for all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the law. Do not be saddened this day, for rejoicing in the LORD must be your strength!" (Nehemiah 8:9-10)

Everyone has access to the wisdom of God in the law of God. When you read Psalm 19, you generate a sense of light and peace. "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life." (John 6:63c) Indeed, the law of the Lord and the events of the day and nature must bring us power and wisdom. It is possible to stop and ponder during parts of the day to claim power and wisdom from the Lord. We just need to meditate on the words of

God and let the words stay on us through the practice of justice and love. The Word of God feeds the human soul and speaks to the soul. It connects people to each other in new and unexpected ways.

When the Word of God connects unique and special persons to each other, then this power of diversity will enhance the oneness of this body. It would be easy if all the people in the world were created alike, then the needs of one would be the needs of all. The problems would have been easily solved, you might say. But then, the brain would not be complemented by the experience of sense. Or for that matter, the body may not even need a brain. "But God has so constructed the body as to give greater honor to a part that is without it, so that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy." (1 Corinthians 12:24-26). To become visible as the Body of Christ, each part must take risks; share the gifts of God; and empower others to become one in God. In God's time, doors will open and spirits will fly.

The word of God is fulfilled in us. When we hear the word of God, something moves within us. "When I heard, I trembled to the core, my lips quivered at the sound; my bones became disjointed and my legs gave way beneath me. Calmly I await the day of anguish which is dawning on the people now attacking us." (Habakkuk 3:16)

This inner movement must propel us to think well, speak well, act well, and live well. "Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing." (Luke 1:21) Unencumbered, the body of souls is engulfed in the sea of God's love and moves as one.

We will never be Lost

- written by Y.C. Tan

One day, a young girl visited her elderly auntie. Then, a police car pulled up in front of her auntie's house and both of them hurried out to find out what has happened. A young and polite policeman explained that an elderly gentleman and two of his friends said that they were lost in an unfamiliar park and couldn't find their way home. "My dear! You and your friends have been walking to that park for more than a decade! How could all of you get lost?" the elderly woman asked her husband. The elderly man, leaned close to his wife and whispered sheepishly, "We know the direction very well and were not lost at all my dear...we were just too tired to walk home."

As I read Matthew's account of the magi, the scenario is apparently different whereby it's a group of travelers genuinely finding their way to a strange and unfamiliar place, searching for Jesus with absolute trust in God. Likewise, as a Catechumen, I'm making my journey of faith not alone but as a community - with other Catechumens and the Church. We look after and support one another while we are finding our way to the light with absolute trust in God too.

On the Epiphany (Manifestation) of the Lord, Christ manifested to the world in Bethlehem where the star shone at it. Since then till now, His grace is still shining and revealed in families, among friends, in the Church, in the unspoken dignity of those who are struggling to find shelter or work and even in the kindness of strangers; lighting up people's lives everywhere. God manifests everywhere.

On the 31st December 2009 Reflection & Healing, Thanksgiving Mass and dinner, we've witnessed His grace and embraced by epiphanies - the epiphany of a community kneeling faithfully before

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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.

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (24 JANUARY 2010)

READINGS: Sunday Missal (Year C):
Page 244
Responsorial Psalm: "Your words are spirit Lord, and they are life."
Prayers of the Faithful: Page 247

Readings for the Week:
Mon 25 Jan – Sat 30 Jan '10
Mon : Conversion of St Paul:
Ac 22:3-16/Mk 16:15-18
Tue : 2 Tim 1: 1-8/Lk 10: 1-9
Wed : 2 Sam 7: 4-17/Mk 4: 1-20
Thu : 2 Sam 7: 18-19,24-29/Mk 4: 21-25
Fri : 2 Sam 11: 1-10, 13-17/Mk 4: 26-34
Sat : 2 Sam 12: 1-7,10-17/Mk 4: 35-41

REFLECTION

This Sunday marks the official proclamation of Jesus' divine mission in a synagogue. And He couldn't have asked for a "better" reception to his announcement! In any case, to prophet Isaiah's text - "He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor" - Jesus' message of salvation is not only for the privileged in this life, but for everyone, even the underprivileged. How often we forget that, and go with the inclination to be around people we're comfortable with. No, it is very important that we as Catholics and Christians, spread to Good News to everyone, rich and poor alike, friends and enemies alike, very much in the same way Jesus did. "To proclaim liberty to captives and give new sight to the blind; to free the oppressed" - Jesus' message is liberating, but more so in a spiritual sense. He is the Messiah and He has the Words of eternal life. With the knowledge of His Teachings and if we follow them, we can be freed from the daily trappings of materialism of the world. The Catholic Church's mission is also an everlasting one on this Earth and as part of Her Body, we the members, are to constantly be open to spreading the Word of God everywhere and in any form. Let us pray to Jesus for this strength to stay true to this divine mission, for Jesus had accomplished it in his lifetime on Earth, and only He can help us to continue with His Mission.

- Lectors Ministry

Pauline Catechism

Saint Angela Merici (March 21, 1474 – January 27, 1540) Founder of the Order of Ursulines - Teacher Adrian Yap

Angela de Merici grew up in a small town in the southern shore of Lake Garda in Lombardy, called Desenzano del Garda. At ten, Angela was orphaned and together with her two sisters, moved to live with their uncle in the town of Salo. When her sister suddenly died, without receiving the sacraments, she became so gravely concerned for her sister's soul that she joined the Third Order of St Francis, to offer more prayers for her sister's soul. Legend has it that Angela's concern was addressed after she had a vision of her sister in God's care.

By twenty, Angela's uncle passed away, and she returned to her hometown. Living among poor children, particularly the marginalised girls, Angela always believed that Christian values were important for the young who grew up without education and religion. Such was the state of affairs that motivated Angela to dedicate her time teaching the girls by converting her home into a school.

Over the years, news of her good works spread around the region and eventually reached Rome. In 1525, Pope Clement VII offered her to serve and take charge of the religious order of nursing sisters but she declined, as she felt nursing was not God's calling.

Not long after, at age 56, Angela made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. During the journey, Angela suddenly became blind

but her condition did not deter her from completing her tour; choosing to rely on devotion of her heart rather than her eyes. On her return journey, she regained her sight. This served to remind her not to shut her eyes to the needs around her, and not to shut her heart to God's call.

Angela realising that God was speaking to her, organised a group of 12 girls comprising of unmarried women, fellow members of the Order of St Francis, and other friends to round up the girls on the streets to teach them. In those days, women and girls were marginalised; being deprived of education in religion, they were prevented from becoming teachers and the unmarried ones not being allowed to go out by themselves.

The members were dedicated and committed to Christ. They met for prayers and classes where Angela reminded them the greater need to serve the poor. They wore no special habit, nor took formal vows, though they observed chastity, poverty and obedience. The group grew to 28 girls and was so successful that Angela was invited to bring her innovative approach to education to other cities, which impressed many people, including the Pope.

Though she turned down the Pope's request, it had perhaps inspired her to make her little group more formal. In 1535, although it was never a religious order in her lifetime, Angela's Company of Saint Ursula, or the Ursulines, was the first group of religious women to work outside the cloister and the first teaching order of women. The members continued to live at home. The idea of a teaching congregation of women was new

The Lighter side of The Apostles

the beagle with yellow slippers



1 Corinthians 12:12-13 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

and took time to develop. It took many years of frustration before Angela's radical ideas of education for all and unmarried women in service were accepted.

It was only in 1537 that Angela was elected as the Mother Superior of the order. Three years later, she died on 27 January 1540 in Brescia.

Lessons:

1. Helping the marginalised or underprivileged regardless of the cost is possible with the inspiration and knowledge that God is beside us and helping us.
2. We are reminded of our attitudes to change: That to try to accomplish anything by force is superfluous as God gives every person free will and desires to constrain none.
3. God merely shows the way, invites and counsels you.

Next steps:

1. In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, give thanks to God for his blessings, and seek out the marginalised who are neglected to render the true help they need.
2. Make a commitment to see it through.

Prayer:

St Angela, you are not afraid of change. You did not let stereotypes keep you from serving. Help us to overcome our fear of change in order to follow God's call and allow others to follow theirs.

Sources:

<http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Christianity/Catholic/Saints/A/Angela-Merici.aspx>
http://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=21
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angela_Merici

Events in our Parish

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 in our SPP Church at 7.20 am (Eng), 6.00 pm (Mandarin) and 8.00 pm (Eng).

COLLECTION OF PALMS - The last day for collection is 24 Jan '10. Thank you.

CARMELITE LENTEN RETREAT 2010 - We invite you to "ENTER THE CLOISTER" in this year's retreat, 26th - 28th Feb. The cost is \$120/- pax twin sharing at Montfort Centre. Please register early with the SPP Secretariat.

MONTHLY PRAYER FOR CMs - Mon 1 Feb 2010. Family members and parishioners are also invited to join in the prayer with our Communion Ministers.

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

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.

LENT-EASTER PROGRAMME 2010 - The Cenacle Sisters and Team will be conducting the following Lent-Easter programme 2010:

THE FOUR LEVELS OF HEALING - Fri 29 Jan (7.30 pm) to Sun 31 Jan '10 (4.00 pm) that will help us find wholeness, balance and fulfilment through healing the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical aspects of our lives. The Facilitator is Dra..Dido Villazor, PhD. Venue: Cenacle 47 Jurong West Street 42.

AT-HOME RETREAT 2010: JOURNEY FROM ASHES TO EASTER - This is a ten-week program based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola which enables one to know Jesus Christ more intimately in the midst of the daily routine of life. It includes a weekly meeting of faith sharing, invites one to daily prayer using Scripture, and spiritual direction. Facilitator: Cenacle Sisters and Team at :

a) CANA the Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo Street : Ten Fridays from 19 Feb - 23 Apr 2010 from 7.30 pm- 9.30 pm, OR
b) Church of St. Francis of Assisi, 200 Boon Lay Ave : Ten Wednesdays from 17 Feb - 21 Apr 2010 from 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm. Registration is required for all programmes. Please contact the Cenacle Sisters Tel. 6565 2895, 9722 3148. Email: cenaclesisters@yahoo.com.sg

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.



Do you know why Catholics dip their hand into the holy water and make the sign of the cross?

Catholics do that for three main reasons:

- in repentance for your sins;
- for protection against the Evil One;
- to remind you of your baptism.

Holy water reminds us to be sorry for our sins. When there is the rite of sprinkling in the Liturgy, we always sing the Asperges, which means "you will sprinkle or wash". Asperges me hysoppo et mundabor; lavabis me et super nivem dealabor. These are words from the great penitential Psalm, Psalm 50: You will sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be cleansed: you will wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow.

Holy water is a sacramental which is a protection against the snares of the devil. The old prayer for the blessing of holy water said: "O God, creator of unconquered power, King of invincible empire and victor ever-great: who put down the powers of hostile dominion and conquer the fury of the roaring enemy, who fight powerfully against our wicked foes: trembling we beseech you, O Lord, we implore you and beg you: that you might graciously look upon this creature of water and salt, kindly illumine it, sanctify it with the dew of your loving kindness, so that wherever it is sprinkled, through the invocation of your holy Name, every infestation of the unclean spirit be cast out, and the terror of the poisonous serpent be driven far away. And may the presence of the Holy Spirit deign to be with us always, we who implore your mercy."

Holy water reminds us of our baptism: of that great day when we ourselves or our parents or sponsors - renounced Satan, professed faith in Christ, and were baptized into the mystery of the Holy Trinity. At that moment all our sins were forgiven: original and actual, and we became children of God, filii in Filio, heirs of the promise, daring now to call God our Father.

When you dip your hand into the holy water font, remember these things, and like Our Lady, treasure them in your heart.