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Special Highlights

~ DEC 2007 ~

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使命宣言

我们，圣体堂区共融团体，愿成为基督圣体活的标记，尽力担当主基督祂舍己牺牲生命，为今日世界所付出的爱之标志与媒介。

MISSION STATEMENT

As the parish-community of the Blessed Sacrament, we want to be a living expression of the Holy Eucharist, by trying to become both a sign and an instrument of Christ's life-giving and self-sacrificial love in the world of today.

Rev. Anthony Hutjes (priest-in-charge)

Rev. Suyono Gerardus (assistant priest)

Rev. Remi Liando (assistant priest)





FROM DAVID'S DESK

When I asked my nephew and niece what they would like for Christmas, they excitedly clamoured for Sum 41's "Does this look infected" CD album - they've combed every music store in Singapore but none has it and none has plans to bring it in.



I knew next to nothing about the rock group but album's title certainly sounds anything but wholesome to me. They then googled the album and showed me its cover and list of songs. I was shocked: the cover showed a horrifying zombie-like guy with blood and infected flesh on his face, with songs that matched its gore - its first song is entitled "The Hell Song".

Every single cell in me wants to protest but I heroically resisted... because I knew if I did, it would certainly not help in any way: they will not change their taste because of me and will think twice before sharing with their "uncool" uncle.

So I just smiled and promised to help. I eventually got it at ebay and after checking out its lyrics and reviews, I realised it's actually quite a good album with great music and mature themes; let's try not to judge our youths too quickly.

In fact, some verses of the "The Hell Song" is good food for thought as we prepare for Christmas:

*I feel I've come to realize,
How fast life can be compromised*

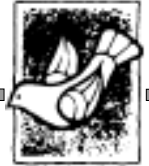
*Step back to see what's
going on...*

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Spotlight is to help create a closer communion of parishioners and to support faith formation through inspired articles and drawings via the Spotlight newsletter and the BSC Website.

David Woon

INSPIRATION



Getting to know Christ through the RCIA

by Vincent Tan & Selina Lau

My wife, Selina, my son, Kenny and I were baptized on Sunday, 28 October this year, at Blessed Sacrament Church.

It has been a wonderful and spiritually enriching year for us at the RCIA programme, in getting to know our Lord, Jesus. It brought us a sense of peace and calmness that we have not experienced before.

Christianity is not unknown to us. My wife was educated in a missionary school and my friends have brought me to Church in my early adult life. However, both of us came from staunch Buddhist backgrounds and we chose to remain atheists then, strongly accorded our achievements to personal efforts. Like many, we focused on providing for our material needs, thinking that they would naturally take care of our spiritual needs as well. How wrong we were!

So, we achieved our career goals, have 3 beautiful children and were comfortable, yet we felt trapped... Empty. There were hard questions to answer:

1. What difference can all the achievements make, if Kenny, our special needs child is unable to take care of himself?
2. Is there a greater goal or mission in life than day-to-day living?
3. Are we at peace within ourselves and with others?
4. And of course: Why this child? Why us?

We tried all means to help our son: my wife gave up her job 13 years ago to focus on learning how to take care of Kenny. Friends introduced us to various therapists and organizations

for help. There were improvements, but progress, challenging.

Three years ago, a Catholic friend suggested we send Kenny to Sunday Bible School. We did. Selina and I were later introduced to the Blessed Sacrament Church's Chinese Mass. We joined the Choir and that was how we started our faith journey.

Our child had brought us to God! In fact our special needs child opened our eyes and makes us appreciate the miracles of God. For Kenny, simple things like eye contact, talking, running, throwing balls are huge challenges, not to mention writing, reading or playing musical instruments. Through Kenny, God has opened our eyes to appreciate simplicity, opened our ears to listen carefully, and opened our hearts to his unconditional love.

The process of the RCIA programme helped us in knowing It gave us a deeper understanding of His love, His deeds and the significance of the Mass, traditions or celebrations. We now understand better the of Christ: why he suffered and died to redeem us closer to God and how we are to live our according to His teachings. The word PASSION now has a special meaning for us:

- P** – Peace within us.
- A** – Anchor in Christ. He lives within us.
- S** – Spiritual strength you can count on to overcome all things.
- S** – Be Simple.
- I** – Be Involved. Sharing your experience / helping out in community
- O** – Be Optimistic, stay hopeful
- N** – Never, never give up on Him. Keep your Faith.

We are now thankful, even in our down moments. We have

peace of mind and we know God is always there to guide us. We trust in Him and count our blessings. We are not alone!

To sum up our faith experience, we would like to share a poem "What is Love" written by our son, Kenny:

What is Love?

Love is feeling good inside

Love is happy

I grow love inside me, bigger and bigger,
until I touch everyone and everything

We are different,

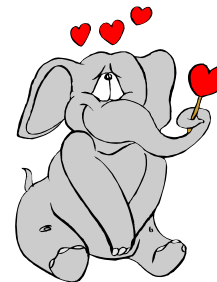
Yet, we are the same

We want to be happy

We want to be loved

I love you!

AMEN **S**



"It is easy to love the people far away. It is not always easy to love those close to us. It is easier to give a cup of rice to relieve hunger than to relieve the loneliness and pain of someone unloved in our own home. Bring love into your home for this is where our love for each other must start."

- Blessed Mother Teresa (1910-1997)

Vigil In Honour Of The Sacred Hearts

Our monthly vigil in honour of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary will be held on the first Friday of the next month, on **7th Dec 2007**. It starts at 9pm on Friday and ends at 6am the next day. Mass will be held in church at **10:30pm** followed by the vigil. You are most welcome to attend part of it, even if you cannot join the whole vigil. Hope to see you there!

**First
Friday** **7
DEC**



INSPIRATION

First Holy Communion Preparatory Retreat - A Parent's Reflection

by Joan Pereira

I will never forget my experience at the Retreat to prepare the Primary 3 students for their first Holy Communion.

When I was first informed of the retreat that will be held on a Saturday afternoon, I thought to myself that this was going to be another boring session where we parents sat down and listened to what the children would go through in preparation. I wondered how I would be able to sit through the 5 hours. I contemplated leaving my child in the Damien Centre while I went about my afternoon errands.

On the day of the retreat, I made up my mind to leave my daughter in the Damien Centre while my husband and I went home. What made us change our minds was when my girl looked at me and said "Mummy, you and Daddy will stay with me throughout to learn right?" I thought to myself that there was nothing to learn since I knew what the Holy Communion is all about. However, when we saw her innocent look that told us she really wanted our company, we decided to stay with her, albeit reluctantly.

The opening prayer made me sit up when the catechist told us to close our eyes to pray. She asked the Lord to take over as some of us did not know why we were there. She seemed to have read my mind. As the session progressed, I became more engrossed because I was taught the meaning of the Mass, especially taking the Holy Communion, and the symbolic meaning of the different things used during Mass.

Father Remi also asked us many thought-provoking questions that made us understand the true meaning of taking the Holy Communion and why we do so. I never looked at the breaking of Bread and drinking of Wine as Jesus being present in our midst. As a Sunday church goer, I just made sure I fulfilled my obligation and wished that the Mass would end early.



After this retreat, I feel God has touched me in His own special way. I now pray more fervently during Mass. I try not to allow myself to get distracted. During the Holy Communion, I now know that it is because I believe in Jesus' presence through the breaking of bread that I can receive the Holy Communion.

All these are new to me and I am just glad that God worked through my daughter to reach out to me, someone very ordinary. **S**

(The First Holy Communion for 2007 for 31 children was subsequently held on Sunday 11 Nov at the 10.30 am Mass.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Religious Instructions at BSC for 2008

Catechism Classes for the youths of our parish have been scheduled to begin on Sat 19th Jan 2008 with an Opening Mass. Look for the full details in the next issue of Spotlight.

For Sale

One adult bicycle, one single bed for child (without mattress) and one table fan. Interested, please call Mrs Tan at 6475 3787.



HAPPENINGS

Alpha Monthly Gathering (Nov)

by Mary Delfin Pereira

Our Alpha monthly gathering held on Sat 10 November started off with the usual fellowship that included dinner. While we partook of a sumptuous potluck meal, we also indulged ourselves in merry chatting. It was a time for us to connect with friends and find out what each of us had been doing since the last time we met.

After our fellowship, we gathered in the hall for some soul-stirring singing before the lights dimmed for the video screening of "Eucharist as a Sacrifice". Silence fell as Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio guided us in gaining a better understanding of the importance of the Eucharist and how the sacrifice in the Eucharist can be instrumental in empowering and enriching us in our daily living.

In explaining the Church's position on why Christ's sacrifice is re-presented at every mass, we were also able to better comprehend the rationale behind practices that many of us might have taken for granted. We were offered Catholic explanations to Protestant objections to our use of the crucifix and the frequent consecration of the bread and wine in remembrance of what Jesus did during the Last Supper through the Mass. Thus, we were able to appreciate the richness in our Catholic teachings.



Apart from being led through the progression of the animal sacrifice in the Old Testament to the perfect sacrifice found in Jesus in the New Testament, we also learnt about how we imitate Christ during each Mass that we attend by sacrificing our wants and desires so that we can fully commit ourselves to God's will.

I think an interesting nugget of information most of us gained was the explanation given to why the priest adds water to the wine during the Eucharistic celebration. Some of us humorously commented that the priest uses the water to dilute the wine so that it does not become "potent"! However, the truth that we learnt enabled us to visualise the huge symbolic significance of that simple act. The absorption of the water into the wine symbolises the absorption of our small sacrifices into the sacrifice of Christ which is then offered up to the Father. I think those of us present for the screening and group discussion would not look upon the Eucharistic celebration in the same light again. We learnt that even the small, seemingly simple, acts can have profound significance.

We ended our Alpha gathering with a short meeting and a prayer session. We looked at the different ways in which we, as part of the BSC community, can contribute our bit for the community and neighbourhood. We prayed that the Good Lord would continue to bless our parish and use us as His instruments. **S**



ALPHA MONTHLY GATHERING - DECEMBER

DATE: Sat 8th Dec 2007

TIME: 7.15 pm

PLACE: St. James Rooms (Level 3 Damien Centre)

HIGHLIGHT: ADVENT - Preparing for Christmas

POTLUCK FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Please bring some food to share

Come with your friends and relations to learn the true meaning of Advent and how to prepare for a meaningful Christmas!



HAPPENINGS

Alpha Day Trip to Kukup

by Alina Sim

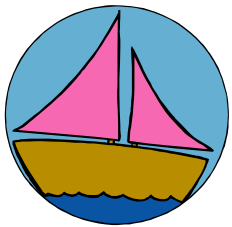
Alpha organized a day trip to Kukup on Sunday 4 November 2007. The response was good, with a total of 44 Post Alpha members with their families and friends. We all assembled at BSC at around 8am and the coach left for Tuas promptly at 8.20am. We had an enjoyable journey. Tidbits were aplenty and there was music to entertain us. We also prayed the Rosary on the way up north to our destination. Everyone seemed happy and light hearted.

Our first stop was at Gelang Patah where we were allowed to have our breakfast from 9.30am to 10.30am. Unfortunately the warm and crowded coffee shop didn't seem inviting. Nevertheless, after tasting the delicious food there, it did make up for the warm and crowded ambience of the laid-back quaint-looking eatery; typical of the coffee shops of rural Singapore in the 50's.

On arrival at Kukup, at around 12.15pm, we were greeted with the smell of fish. It was a small seaside town with a few shops and restaurants. There were many houses on stilts at the side.



Our group was then taken on a boat ride of



about 200 metres to visit a fish farm. We were introduced to the town, its surroundings, and its main livelihood being the export of fish and shrimps to other parts of Malaysia. At the fish farm, all kinds of dried foods were sold. We were also shown the many types of fish being reared in the different 'ponds'. This was followed by seafood lunch and shopping.

We left Kukup at around 3pm and headed for upmarket shopping at a modern spanking shopping complex at Tebrau City where we spent about two hours.

Along the way back, we stopped for fruit purchases at a road side stall.

Throughout the journey, we were entertained to many jokes. We even did a bit of karaoke singing. Our tour guide, Samy, regaled us with tales of St. Francis Xavier losing his crucifix by the sea, which was brought back to him by a crab. St. Francis Xavier blessed the crab and since then, the crab species with a cross on its shell proliferated. It became known as the "Holy Crab". It appears that the shell of the crab is in demand in the Portuguese sector of Malacca.



The day ended well with a seafood dinner at Johor Bahru where Senoko in Singapore could be seen just across the water. Although the food is better in Singapore, the company was good and fun. We all trudged home tired but happy. Alpha will certainly be organising more such trips and all are most welcome to join in. We wish to thank the organizers for this trip. **S**

Alpha Christmas Celebration

29 Dec (Sat) 7:30 - 10pm @
Damien Hall
Open to all parishioners!



An evening of FUN: Games, Christmas Carols Sing-along, Lucky Draw, Dance items and guest performances

From 5 years old to 85 years old : \$6 (the rest FREE!)

Buffet Dinner

Get your tickets from the office or from Post Alpha Leaders!

**Youth Section
Vibes (see hardcopy)**

**Youth Section
Vibes (see hardcopy)**

**Youth Section
Vibes (see hardcopy)**

(see hardcopy)



(see hardcopy)



Treasure in Heaven by *Thomas Ng*

Last year, on 10 October, I had a sharing with CNG members and the Gospel used was The Rich Man (Mark 10: 18-27). During the sharing, I briefly referred to Luke 12, the parable of The Rich Fool and Jesus' teaching on 'Treasure in Heaven'. In Mark chapter 10, upon hearing that he had to sell all his possessions and give the money to the poor before following Jesus, the rich man was sad.

Jesus then told his disciples: "*It is much harder for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.*" (Mark 10:25). In figurative speech, Jesus illustrated the difficulty through the contrast of the largest Palestinian animal (camel) and the small opening of the 'eye of a needle' (a low, narrow gate in a town's walls left open at night). He didn't stress that all rich persons cannot enter the Kingdom of God but wanted them to share.

In our modern society, money could become an end in itself, with people possessing it only for personal benefits. In the parable of The Rich Fool, the man's property yielded an abundance of crops. He was a self-centered man who had not thought about others nor considered how the hungry or poor might benefit from the blessing he had received. While thinking he had many years to eat, drink and enjoy life, God brought an end to him that very night; in the end, he did not benefit from his earthly treasure at all.

In the same chapter of Luke, verses 32-34, Jesus is teaching about the proper use of wealth. He teaches us not to fall into greed or selfishness. However, He does not say that possession itself is evil nor speak against personal savings and retirement plans. The danger in becoming rich is that we may forget God, or others, or even both.

In an assuring tone, Jesus told his disciples that the 'Heavenly Father is pleased to give them the Kingdom'. He urges them to store up 'treasure in heaven' rather than amassing wealth on earth. This is because "*this treasure will never decrease as no thief can get to it and no moth can destroy it. For your heart will always be where your treasure is.*" (Luke 12:33-34) **S**



The same mission - a renewed zeal

by Jeffry Santoso

It was Saturday, 13 October 2007, and as usual on a Saturday morning, I went to the church for Holy Mass. Instead of the usual morning crowd, this time I was greeted by Jocelyn, who gave me a tag with my name and "RCIA Sponsor" written on it. It was an RCIA day of recollection.

Father Suyono offered the Holy Mass that morning. After giving thanks to Our Lord for the Mass, I joined the crowd for some beehoon and tea at the canteen. I met my fellow sponsors, some newly-baptised, and the RCIA committee there.

Then came the time for our first session of the day. It was the first time I set foot at the new Fr. Damien Centre. Before the initial awe even subsided, I reached St. Peter's Room and greeted the first speaker, Fr. Renckens, our former parish priest. He started the lesson with a quick look at the 8th encyclical of our late Holy Father, titled *Redemptoris Missio*. He highlighted the important points from the encyclical, explaining to us the importance of our participation in the Church's missionary activities.

A short break followed, and I spent the time visiting Our Lord at the new adoration chapel. I reflected on what Fr. Renckens had said and how I could improve my apostolic endeavours.

Fr. Suyono took the next session. He linked our experience as RCIA sponsors to his own experience in his seminary days, coupling it with a few catchwords which all start with a 'C'. Although he had more than 3 'C' catchwords, the 3 'C's that were particularly etched in my mind was compassion, communication, and competence.

The next session was supposed to be taught by Fr. Remi, but he

was some 2400 km away for an assignment at Manila. As a replacement, he left us an introduction video to a Bible-study series, "The Great Adventure" by Jeff Cavins.

Fr. Anthony closed our day of recollection with a short exhortation on how to serve better as RCIA sponsor. One message that struck me was his urge to deepen my own faith first as I would not be able to share what I do not have.

To close an amazing recollection, we had a (not-so)-light refreshment and a get-together at the neighbouring room.

At the end of the recollection, I stepped out with the same calling that Christ had bestowed on my baptism, but with a renewed zeal to accomplish His mission to baptise all nations in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. **S**



Congratulations to Ignatius Tan, Arthur Soh, Cordelia Krishnan and Espino Reah! You are our winners for last month's contest!

This month, we'll have our annual **Christmas Front Cover contest**. Submit a cover page (A5 page, no colour) for Spotlight's Christmas issue by **16 Dec** and win exciting prizes! There will be 3 winners - the champion will win a **S\$25** popular bookstore voucher and the champion's entry will be used as the front cover while the other 2 winners will win mystery prizes.
(For children 12 years old and below; not for Spotlight members and their family members)