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Please include your name, contact number and address. The editorial team reserves the right to edit any letters or articles for publication.

Special Highlights

~ JAN 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.

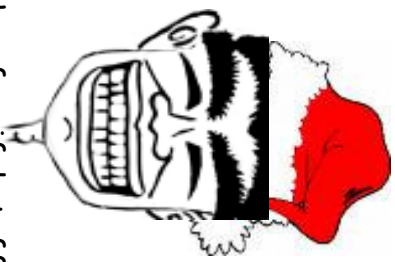
Rev. Anthony Huijes (priest-in-charge)
Rev. Suyono Gerardus (assistant priest)
Rev. Remi Lianda (assistant priest)





FROM DAVID'S DESK

I was very tempted this year to just give my nephews and nieces Ang Pows to save the trouble of looking for Christmas gifts. This is because they usually don't quite like the gifts that I chose. Moreover, most of them are teenagers and I know they would surely prefer a cash gift to other fanciful stuff.



But I resisted the temptation - somehow, deep within me, I know I shouldn't choose the easy way out. True, they would love the Ang Pows but then, I would be sending them the wrong message of materialism. In the end, I spent several hours looking for a more valuable gift for them: Wisdom (books).

They might not appreciate the books but my conscience is clear: I have given them what I believe to be the best for them.

Well, in a similar way, we should also think about our gift to Jesus... Should we choose the **easy** way out by just donating some money, saying a couple of extra prayers, doing some ad-hoc voluntary work or should we prepare to overhaul our hearts to make room for His coming and to finally forgive those we deemed "unworthy" of forgiveness?

On behalf of the Spotlight Team, I would like to wish all readers a most special and blessed Christmas!

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 Moon

Spending Christmas with Our Family

by Margie Koh

INSPIRATION



During this time of the year, many of us may be preparing to celebrate the season with our loved ones, family members and relatives. Some of us who are able to take leave from work, may go for a short holiday with our family or may want to spend time with our family at our playgrounds, parks, beaches, go swimming, fishing or stay in Holiday Bungalows.

Whatever we do, it is important for a family to stay as one and live as one. Living the faith and love of our beliefs and coming to forgive each other is doing the things God wants us to do together. We also say that a family that prays together stays together. We also like to use the proverb: "Charity begins at home".

There is an old Chinese saying which says, *"If a mother hen cannot take care of her own brood, how could she ever go on to take care of someone else's?"* Family unity is important.

The book of Deuteronomy 6:4-9 says to us that as members of the family we can teach each other about God: *"Hear O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you*

are away on a journey, when you are lying down and when you are getting up again. Tie them to your hands as a reminder, and wear them on your forehead. Write them on your door posts of your houses and on your gates."

Today we are living in a hectic society. As a family, we are often caught in situations with too much tension. Doing too many things in a day can be quite trying for some, e.g. deadlines to meet in the office, cleaning, washing, cooking, taking care of children and their schoolwork, etc. To share these tasks, we might sometimes argue, fuss and fight easily because of misunderstandings. Our minds get preoccupied, and some of our words may come out unkind and harsh to hurt the other person. At the end of it, one may not want to forgive or forget because of hurts.

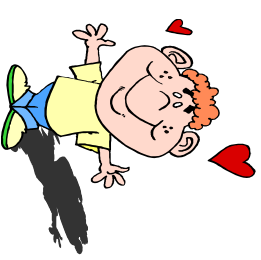
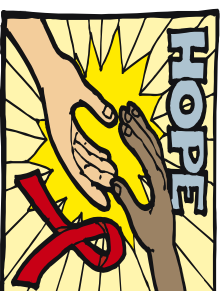
But our Lord knows the pressure that is mounting in us long before we discovered it. Yes, we should be glad that He would give us the grace to FORGIVE in this season as we prepare our hearts for Him.

And to prepare my heart for the Lord, I am taking this opportunity to forgive my family, repent my faults to be patient in loving one another. Patience gives me hope, joy and perseverance in doing the Lord's will. As St James wrote in his letter, "*Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*" (James 1:4)

Unless we forgive our brothers, we would be hurt far more than them. As God's children, it is important for us to acknowledge and repent of our faults, and be sorry. It's also necessary for the one who got hurt to forgive quickly as the Lord has forgiven us (Colossians 3:13). Jesus told the parable of the unmerciful servant to tell the extent and number of times one should forgive (Matt 18:21-22).

Indeed the merciful Lord delights to turn our blunders into blessings. We should yield to humble ourselves and forgive one another in any grievance. This way, we could bind together in the perfect unity of love. With Him to lead us, the peace of Christ would rule in our hearts; for He delights to use all our challenges and our pains to nudge us towards the revelation of His message and knowledge of His kingdom. Romans 12:21 gives this good advice: "*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*"

May it be for you and me to enjoy the Peace, Hope, Love & Joy of Christ this Christmas as we prepare our hearts for Him. Amen **S**



"Every time we love, every time we give,
it's Christmas."

Dale Evans (1912-2001) Author



INSPIRATION

The Spirit of Christmas

by Patricia Ang

What does the Christmas Spirit mean to you? Is it the feel good feeling you get at this time of the year? Is it the beautiful Christmas tree that is decked with gift wrapped presents? Is it the sound of familiar carols or the exchange of friendly smile between strangers? As we sit and reflect, the above elements may not reflect the true meaning of Christmas Spirit; they reflect feelings in response to the commercialism that distorts the real spirit of Christmas.

To me the spirit of Christmas is to be humble in the service of God, to my family and to others as well. It is a spirit of giving unconditional love, not an easy self attained one but only of His Spirit's power and grace. Many a times we are distracted by how we are treated by others that we forget how to behave as Christians.

What I would like to share with you this Christmas is about the BIRTH OF HOPE. He gives hope to those who call out and long for Him. He is the one who causes everything to work together for the good of those who love Him and are called according to his purpose for them. For he knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son (Romans 8:28-29). It is where I can have my confidence and never to be disgraced. This truth gives me the confidence of Eternal Life which God has promised before the world began. And at the right time he has revealed this Good News and we announce it to everyone (Titus 1:2-3).

Christmas can be a tiring time for those who carry the burden of hard work, stressful family situations and personal loss. But let's also remember that Christ came into our world to lift up those who are weighed down with such issues so that we can raise our eyes to welcome Him at Christmas (Luke 4:18).

This Christmas season, have we prepared our gift for the One whose birthday we celebrate? How about those in the society who are unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody? We are living out the Christmas Spirit by being in humble service of Christ, to enrich the lives of others and those we come in contact with by giving time, care, prayers, and concern to do good in whatever the need arises. It is also about repentance, forgiving and bringing about a change in lifestyles in the inner being and for one to be born again and live in the God's Spirit that is filled with hope, peace, joy and love.

Jesus Christ who grew and redeemed the world from its sins blessed us with gifts so that we can work together with him for His glory. In so doing we have allowed our personal life to become a "Bethlehem" for our Lord and Savior! Let us focus our thoughts, actions and motivations towards honoring the Baby who grew up and died for our sins!



"Dear Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God and my Savior. I need your love to cleanse me from my mistakes and wrongdoings. I need your light to drive away all darkness. I need your peace to fill and satisfy my heart. I now open the door of my heart and ask You to come into my life and give me your gift of eternal life. Amen." **S**

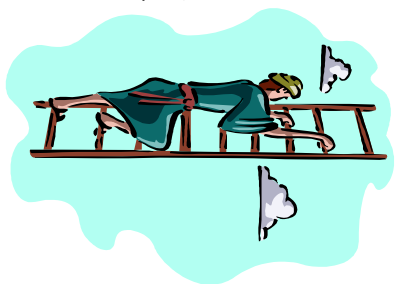


IN RETROSPECT

Hell, Earth or Heaven

by Beatrice Ong

Hell, Earth or Heaven – where do you want to be if given a choice? By all accounts, Hell is not a nice place because it is associated with torture, pain and weeping. So let's avoid going there!



Earth is certainly a much better place than Hell. It has many beautiful and interesting places to visit as well as cultures and traditions to enjoy and experience. But if we happen to live in countries like Iraq or Afghanistan, life can be terribly hellish because of poverty and frequent bombings.

So, do we want to live permanently here on Earth? The answer is probably both YES and NO. YES because we haven't found a better place than Earth yet. NO because sooner or later we all will die. So where does that leave us? Heaven of course! Heaven is associated with abundant life, love, joy and peace but it seems so distant, mysterious and elusive...

Jesus' birth is unique. The Holy Spirit came upon Mary, a virgin. She conceived and gave birth to Jesus. Jesus is both God and Man; God because He was born of the Holy Spirit; Man because He was born of Mary. In Him, Heaven and Earth became One.

It is necessary for Jesus to be both God and Man because only as God, He could forgive our sins, make us Holy and raise us to eternal life. As Man, He could die for us because we all have sinned and earned the death penalty. This God-Man nature qualified Jesus as our Mediator between God and us.

So given the choice, where do we want to be – Hell, Earth or Heaven? The choice seems crystal clear. God paid an enormous price to redeem us. God sent His Son Jesus to become one of us so that we might enter Heaven. And when we understand WHY He came to Earth and believe and accept Him as our personal Saviour, then Heaven will not be mysterious or elusive anymore. **S**



PARISH HAPPENINGS

Damien Hall Update
(refer to hardcopy)



HAPPENINGS

ALPHA MONTHLY GATHERING

- DECEMBER 2006

by Richard Lowe

The December monthly gathering, open to all those who have attended the Alpha Course and their friends, was held on Sat 9th December evening in the Cabin. As we are in the Advent Season, the theme for the gathering was: "Come, Lord Jesus."

The evening began with the usual Fellowship Potluck Meal. As the attendance for this event was not too encouraging (only 35 people), we did not have a good spread of food laid out. Nevertheless, everyone had enough to eat and no one went home hungry!

The Advent Prayer Service that followed, was a simple and yet meaningful affair: The main focus of this service was on "Patience": a very important virtue one needs in order to be a true Christian. "We should not grumble among ourselves; We should steady our hearts because Jesus is coming soon." (James 5: 8-10)



Finally, we watched a video entitled, "The Fourth Wise Man." We were divided into 4 groups of 8 people. The video provided a lot of food for thought. We had to reflect on our relationship with Jesus, and more importantly, on our relationship with family members and those whom we love or those who mean something to us.

I personally feel that the two and a half hours spent together in Prayer, Fellowship and Reflection, was time well spent. I am sure many of us who were present found it a meaningful and informative gathering. Some of us would have left that night with a better understanding of the true Spirit of Advent. We were even shown how we could prepare an Advent Wreath for our own homes. We have also learnt the significance of the colours of the four candles and why the wreath is circular in shape.

We praise and thank God for His love and goodness in enabling so many people to grow to better relationship with His son Jesus through the Alpha Course in 2006. **S**

ALPHA MONTHLY GATHERING - JAN 2007

Day/Date: Thursday 28th December 2006

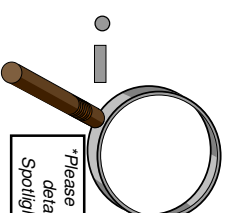
Time: 7:30 pm - 10 pm

Place: The CABIN

Highlight: Overview of the Bible – "The Old Testament - What is it and who needs it."

POTLUCK FELLOWSHIP MEAL
Kindly bring some food to share.

YOUR FRIENDS AND RELATIVES ARE MOST WELCOME TO JOIN US !



CLASSIFIEDS

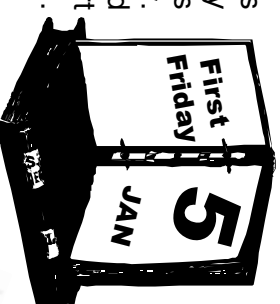
*Please include your full name & contact details (will not be printed out in Spotlight). For BSC parishioners only.

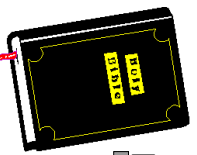
Voluntary service: retired female London trained hair-stylist willing to train hair-cutting. Contact Mrs Nellie Chan: **62740422**

Room for Rent at Blk 6 Holland Close #03-16, interested, please see owner, (Nolan) at unit.

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 the **5th Jan 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!





FROM THE BIBLE

General Outline of the Bible (Part 2)

by Thomas Ng

The divisions of the New Testament are:

1. Five Historical Books
2. Twenty-one Didactic Books
3. One Prophetic Book

The five Historical Books are the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John together with the Acts of the Apostles. My articles on The Four Gospels And Their Symbols (part 1 & 2) in March and April 2005 have references about the Gospels.

The Acts of the Apostles was also written by Luke as part of a two-volume work. It describes the origin and spread of the Church through the help of the Holy Spirit. It also details the apostolate of Peter and Paul preaching the Good News.

The twenty-one Didactic Books consist of:

- (a) The 13 Letters of Paul (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon)
- (b) The Letter to Hebrews
- (c) The Seven Catholic Letters (James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2 & 3 John and Jude)

These Letters (or Epistles) are the first documents of the early Church, containing doctrinal and moral instructions, the way of Christian life, good works, love of God, and refutations against false teachers prophets.

The Letter to the Hebrews was specially written to the Jews converted to Christianity. The purpose was to show them the pre-eminence of Christ's priesthood above the old Law. This was to encourage them not to lose faith and turn back to Judaism.

The Prophetic Book is the Book of Revelation (or Apocalypse). It is written around AD 95, and is the last book in the Bible with the most symbols and mystical visions.

All the Books of the Bible were originally written in Hebrew, Greek or Aramaic. Latin first appeared in AD150. At the request of Pope St Damasus in AD382, St Jerome, a learned scholar and monk, made his fresh Latin translations with the Greek manuscripts. He completed the task in AD405, and had made the best and grandest version of the Holy Bible called the 'Vulgate'.

In 1546, the Council of Trent declared it as the only authorised version allowed to Catholics. Later, the English version of Douay-Rheims comes from the Vulgate. In recent years, we have the New American Bible, the Jerusalem Bible, the Revised Standard Version and other versions.

In the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Vatican II says: "*Holy Mother Church, relying on the belief of the Apostles, holds that the books of both the Old and the New Testaments in their entirety, with all their parts, are sacred and canonical because, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they have God as their Author*" (No. 11).

The Catholic Church advises her members to read and study the Bible. Let us honour and read the 'Word of God' for St Jerome said: "*Ignorance of the Scripture is ignorance of Christ.*" **S**



**POETIC
MOMENTS**

In Spiritual Conflict

- Do we by faith choose GOD's way
- Or by worldly flesh, choose Satan's way?
- Are we fair-weathered Christians
- Or have we developed the Christian character
- Of courage and resilience to all things evil?

- Are we easily discomfited by Satan's lies and deception?
- Do we cower before Satan's intimidation?
- Or do we hear and trust the sweet gentle voice of our LORD
- Reminding us: "Do not be afraid, I am with you always."

- Do we really seek the truth, that will set us free;
- The love that binds our wounds?
- Do we choose to follow our LOVING SHEPHERD
- Or do we think we can rely on our own frail strength?

- The WORD of GOD spells out every choice
- For it is our choice that determines the outcome;
- And not the harsh circumstances.
- Choose wisely to follow the HOLY RIGHTEOUS LORD
- Do not be seduced by the glitter of the material and temporal;
- Choose what our Sovereign LORD
- And ultimate Judge of mankind afford;
- Unity with the HOLY TRINITY
- Joy and Life eternal.

~ Shirley Lau ~



Relax Lehi!
 Congratulations to Reah Espino! You are our winner for last month's Spotlight cover contest! To win exciting prizes, unscramble the words below and complete the verse, and send in your entries by 7 Jan 07.
(For children 12 years & below; not for Spotlight members & family members)

[Refer to harcopy]

Name: _____ Age _____

Address: _____