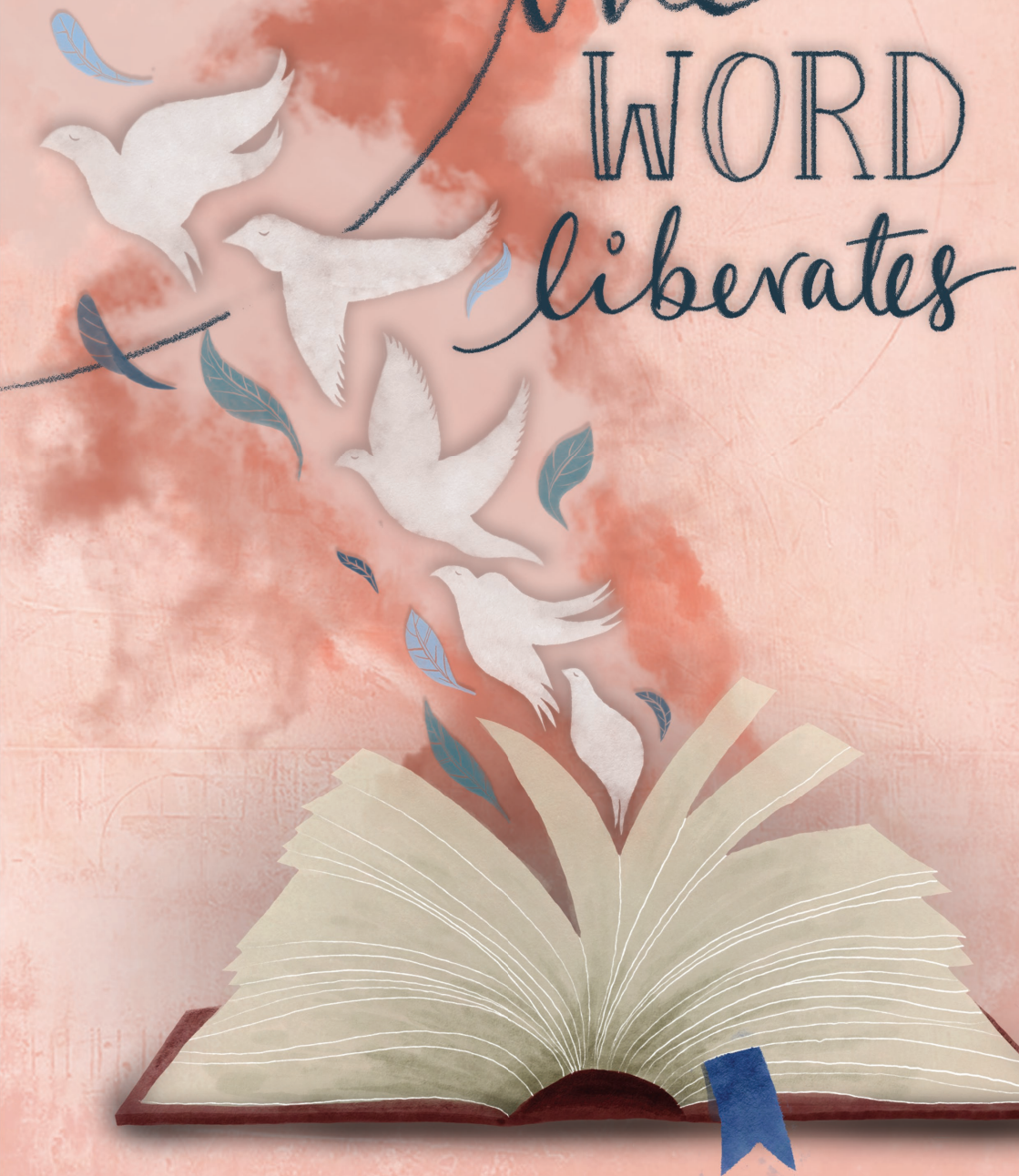


the WORD liberates



JESUS 4 EVERYONE

The slogan of the New Evangelisation in the
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore





1

Jesus is depicted by the figure “J”

2

In Jesus we say “Yes”

3

It is “us” who encounter Jesus

4

The colour tone in the word “Jesus” shows a movement from lukewarm (yellow/orange) depicted by “us” to passionate (red) depicted by “Yes”

5

The yellow tone on the 3 strips moving into the red tone shows another movement from lukewarmness to passion after encountering Jesus

6

The 3 strips signify that by our baptism, we are called to be priest, prophet, and king. We share in the 3-fold mission of Jesus Christ.

7

“4” represents the four Tenets of the New Evangelisation: Word, Worship, Communion and Witness.

YOUR OPINION IS VALUABLE

Thanks for picking up a copy of this booklet! As you dive into the pages of this booklet, we would like to know what worked and what could be better improved.

Let us know what you think by giving us your valuable feedback.



one.org.sg/feedback

CONTENTS

05

The Easter Message

06

The Purpose of This Booklet

06

How to Use This Booklet

10

Sundays of Year B

11

Easter 2020 / The Resurrected Word

17

2nd Sunday of Easter / Believe in the Word

23

3rd Sunday of Easter / The Promised Word

31

4th Sunday of Easter / The Authority of the Word

37

5th Sunday of Easter / Abide in the Word

43

6th Sunday of Easter / The Word is for Everyone

49

7th Sunday of Easter / The Word is Living and Active

55

Pentecost Sunday / Celebrating the Word

62

Appendix

65

Acknowledgements

The Easter Message

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

AN AWESOME EASTER TO ALL.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

'In the beginning when the world was a formless void', our Father began His work of Creation with the Holy Spirit and the Word became flesh at the appointed time. We are told that all things came to be through Him.

Easter is the time we celebrate another creation. Life made new in a wondrous way in the resurrected Word. To know the mysteries of our Lord, we have to turn to His revealed Word. There is no other way as His Word is alive, active and has power to create and re-create.

To realise the power of the Word and to be able to live as the Easter children of our Father, we must be rooted in the community that believes, ponders and lives the Word of the Lord. During these weeks as we continue to celebrate Easter, we invite you to be in the community of believers

to strengthen one another through study, fellowship and prayer. There is much that the Lord wants us to know. There is much that the Lord wants us to experience through this Word and through one another.

Easter joy doubles when it is shared. Easter peace permeates ones' lives when it is shown to those around us. During this time of Easter, there is more that the Lord wants to reveal to us.

Do your part by bringing others to the Word of the Lord for it is in Him that Christian life finds its fullest meaning.

May the Lord bless you with Easter peace, joy and love.

Rev. Fr. Terence Pereira
Episcopal Vicar for the New Evangelisation

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BOOKLET

This resource is intended for families, RCIA groups, parish organisations and ministries small Christian communities and neighbourhood Christian communities. It may also be used for individual reflection.

- To promote the Christian community in the neighbourhood as a place where we can hear the word of God and put it into practice.
- To give participants an experience of community and a sense of their mission by reaching out to neighbours and those in need.
- To gather parish organisations / ministries to pray together as one and put Christ back in the centre.
- To increase communication between family members. Love should be the main message in all communication, so the sessions are aimed at families sharing stories, doing meaningful activities together, sharing faith and being reconciled with one another.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

These reflections may be used either (1) before participating in Sunday's liturgy, as a way of preparation to receive God's Word at Mass, or (2) after participating in the liturgy as a continuation of 'breaking open the Word of God' in our lives.

In the spirit of generosity, group members volunteer beforehand to read Scriptures and other parts of the text.

A different group facilitator can take the responsibility in each session to foster good interaction and to keep time.

Someone should record the discussion in general terms and then email it to the members who are absent.

The duration of each session is about two hours.

The time and place for the next meeting should be announced at the end of each session.

SESSION FORMAT

OPENING PRAYER

Everyone will pray the opening prayer and sing the opening hymn to foster a spirit of reflection and openness to God's Word and one another.

READINGS

The three scripture texts should be read at least twice, allowing some time for a silent listening to the Word.

Then the passages are explained by the leader or group facilitator using the given write up. Preparation is recommended for the leader or group facilitator to read and understand prior the meeting.

THOUGHTS

Someone reads this section which is meant to deepen our reflection(s) on the readings of the week. Allow adequate time for reflection(s).

REFLECTIONS

This section is designed with the different groups in mind. Select the section relevant to your group or use the individual section if you are doing it on your own. Reflect on the questions and allow time for response.

TAKE HOME

Discern how the Word of God is inviting us collectively or individually to respond through concrete action(s).

DOING YOUR BIT

Your action to reach out or evangelise to another person to share the Good News of Jesus.

CLOSING PRAYER

The session ends with a prayer being prayed by everyone in the group. Everyone will pray for each participant and then for the community.

APPENDIX: ACTIVITIES

The appendix section contains activities that further enrich our spiritual journey with our fellow sisters and brothers in Christ.

FACILITATING GROUP REFLECTION

For where two or three meet in my name, I am there with them - Matthew 18:20

Be mindful of Christ's presence. Adopt a humble and reverent manner when speaking or acting within the group. Read the text meditatively and give your best attention to the words of the Gospel readings.

May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you - John 17:21

Help everyone to feel at home and take special care to welcome newcomers. Treat each person as a beloved member of the community and invite one another to participate in the session by taking turns to read the text. Use a language that everyone can understand so that no one feels left out.

...and their great men make their authority felt. Among you this is not to happen - Mark 10:42-43

Avoid being authoritative or domineering by acting aggressively, flaunting knowledge or telling others what to do. If there is advice to be given, do so after the reflection is done. Choose words that are easily understood by all when speaking. Avoid giving lengthy and verbose sharing that consume other people's opportunities to offer their sharing.

If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross every day and follow me - Luke 9:23

At the core of these reflections is the Word of God, the teachings of the Church and the invitation for our conversion towards Christ. If the group wanders away from this during the session, gently invite one another to re-focus.

Because when the time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what you should say - Luke 12:12

There is no need to prepare sharing in advance or to appoint people to share. Wait patiently for God's Spirit to inspire generosity and remember to give thanks after someone volunteers to contribute their own faith experience.

...your light must shine in people's sight, so that, on seeing your good works, they may give praise to your Father in heaven - Matthew 5:16

These reflections challenge us to do the will of God - to reflect the love of Christ to others we meet. Spend some time at the start of the next group session sharing with one another how each one has tried to do this over the past week.



CATHOLICSG RADIO

brings you the audio version of 2021 Easter Reflection Booklet.

Join our presenters as they take you through the reflection via the CatholicSG Radio app. Broadcast times will be as follows:

Tuesdays & Thursdays at 9am

(before participating in the Sunday liturgy,
as a way of preparation to receive God's Word at Mass.)

Saturdays & Sundays at 6pm

(after participating in the liturgy as a continuation of
'breaking open the Word of God' into our life.)

Besides listening via a web browser: <https://radio.catholic.sg>,
the CatholicSG Radio app is available for downloading via
the following app stores:



Apple App Store



Google Play Store



Huawei App Gallery

PODCAST VERSIONS

The same reflections will be available as podcasts on the app itself.

THE WORD LIBERATES

Sundays of Easter (Year B)

WEEK	THEME & READINGS
Easter Sunday	The Resurrected Word Acts of the Apostles 10:34, 37-43 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-9
2nd Sunday of Easter	Believe in the Word Acts of the Apostles 4:32-35 1 John 5:1-6 John 20:19-31
3rd Sunday of Easter	The Promised Word Acts of the Apostles 3:13-15, 17-19 1 John 2:1-5 Luke 24:35-48
4th Sunday of Easter	The Authority of the Word Acts of the Apostles 4:8-12 1 John 3:1-2 John 10:11-18
5th Sunday of Easter	Abide in the Word Acts of the Apostles 9:26-31 1 John 3:18-24 John 15:1-8
6th Sunday of Easter	The Word is for Everyone Acts of the Apostles 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48 1 John 4:7-10 John 15:9-17
7th Sunday of Easter	The Word is Living and Active Acts of the Apostles 1:15-17, 20-26 1 John 4:11-16 John 17:11-19
Pentecost Sunday	Celebrating the Word Acts of the Apostles 2:1-11 Galatians 5:16-25 John 15:26-27; 16:12-15

The Resurrected Word

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty Father,

You sent Your Son Jesus Christ not only to assume our human nature and share our life, but to suffer His Passion and death. You raised Him to life so that we may know our destiny and live with hope.

May our celebration of Easter help us to reflect on the values we uphold, the lives we live and the faith we share. As we continue to walk through the trials of life, may we, one day, share in the resurrection and glory of Jesus Christ, with You Heavenly Father and in the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

FASTER SUNDAY

READINGS

First Reading Acts 10:34, 37-43

The lives of the Jewish people were guided by hundreds of laws and regulations that encompassed every aspect of life. These laws stated what was allowed and what was not allowed, what was clean and unclean. The objective of the Law was to protect the Israelites from falling into pagan worship and apostasy, by keeping a distance between them and pagans. What it created instead, was separation and prejudice. The Jews saw themselves as distinct and superior. Salvation was about belonging to the right group and keeping every detail of the Law. Now Peter is sent to the home of Cornelius, the Gentile, to deliver an important message not only to him but to all people. There is no more separation between Jews and Gentiles. We are saved by Christ's death and resurrection. God our Father's redemption is plentiful and it is for all.

Second Reading Col. 3:1-4

Colossae was a small town in Asia Minor. The Church there was growing but now the people were confused by false teachings. We do not know what these false teachings were. What we do know

is that nowadays, people want to make sense of their lives, they want to live with purpose and hope. In our search for meaning, we can inadvertently take on beliefs that run counter to our faith. A dependence of material things, a preoccupation with knowledge, a superiority complex, and even attachment to superstitious practices.

Why is this passage read on Easter Sunday? Because it reminds us of our faith in the resurrection. Through baptism, we share in the death and resurrection of Christ and we are raised to a new life. This means new values and a new lifestyle. Our thoughts should be on things of heaven, not on the distractions and fears of this world. The resurrection of Christ changes everything about what we believe and how we live.

Gospel Reading John 2:1-9

Imagine the sorrow the disciples felt when Jesus died. They had placed all their hope in Him and now their hopes were dashed. The crucifixion of Jesus was devastating, not to mention the fear they felt and the guilt they had for abandoning Him.

Now, suddenly, Mary Magdalene returns with the news that the tomb is empty. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him,' she says. What is the meaning of this? Without hesitation, Peter and John run to the tomb. Exhausted and breathless, they go in to find that it is indeed empty. Of course, they remembered Jesus' prediction that He would rise again on the third day, but how could they possibly understand or place their hope in such an outrageous claim? *'Till this moment, they had failed to understand...'*

REFLECTION

'Till this moment, they had failed to understand.' What had the disciples not understood? Do we understand Jesus' death? We imagine that Jesus knew He was going to die, that He welcomed His death and knew for certain that He would rise again. Or did Jesus face His Passion and death in the same way that we face our struggles and our death? With confusion, fear and with the sense that God our Father has abandoned us. Perhaps, Jesus felt as confused as we do.

On Thursday night, we found Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane overcome by fear, confusion and despair. He asks His Father to take this suffering away. He pleads with His friends to support Him but they cannot.

Finally, on the cross, He cries out: *'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'*

What do we understand about Jesus' death and resurrection?

At the garden, Jesus is confronted with His failure to change the world. He can't even change His own disciples. All He can do was to be obedient to God our Father's will. At the end of His life, He hangs naked on a cross, battered, humiliated and bleeding to death. He says: *'Father into your hands I commend my spirit.'* I have done what You have asked me to do. I have completed the mission You have given me. I have done my best. That's all I can do. I leave the rest in Your hands. All Jesus could do was to try His best and have faith in God our Father. Faith that God our Father will use us, broken as we are, to build the Kingdom. In faith, Jesus knew that God our Father will not abandon Him and would make His life and death bear fruit. God our Father will do the same with us and with our lives.

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

What can we do to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord in a fitting way?

For Ministry

How can our ministry reflect on and grow in our understanding of the resurrection of Jesus?

For Family

What hope does our faith in the resurrection afford us for our family members who have returned to the Lord? Share with one another.

For Individual

How is my lifestyle, my values and my faith, fundamentally transformed by my faith in the resurrection of Jesus?

Take Home

The resurrection of Jesus must be the foundation and centre of our faith. It must then shape our values and lifestyle.

Doing Your Bit

Today, there are so many people who live without meaning and without hope. Share with them, your personal experience the hope that the faith in Christ's resurrection brings to you.

CLOSING PRAYER

Loving and merciful Father,

in whom redemption and mercy are plentiful; may this celebration of Easter remind us – as well as our families, parishes, communities and ministries – of our faith in the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of all people into eternal life. May this same faith help us to live with a renewed hope and purpose. May we live lives worthy of the destiny for which You have called us to.

We ask this through Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

MY EASTER REFLECTION JOURNAL

= Believe in the Word =

OPENING PRAYER

Eternal Father,

as we continue to celebrate Your Son's resurrection, fill us with the power of Easter as we ponder His rising from the dead and the new life He gave to His Apostles and the early Christian community. Help us, as Jesus' followers, to move forward in the power of His resurrection to build a vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church that will be leaven for society.

2ND SUNDAY OF EASTER

READINGS

First Reading Acts 4:32-35

What an inspiring passage this is, describing life in the early Christian community as the apostles worked miracles in Jesus' name, bore witness to His resurrection, and the community believed in God our Father's Word. The result of their belief is a great unity and love among them as seen in the readiness of members to sell their properties so that no one in their midst would be in need.

This kind of sharing is usually done only within families and this passage shows how Jesus' message of charity and brotherhood resonated in the early Church. It inspired the early Christians to be detached from material possessions and embrace one another, rich and poor, as one family in Christ. A community built on these principles could not fail to spark wonder and admiration from others, as evidenced in the writings of Tertullian, an early Roman theologian. He noted that people outside this community remarked: "Look how they [Christians] love one another."

Second Reading 1 John 5:1-6

This letter was written at a time when the community of John had dissident members who claimed to have a special knowledge of God our Father and did not practice Jesus' commandment to love one another. John tries to rectify this misunderstanding and his argument goes like this: Everyone who claims to love God our Father has to love those whom God our Father has begotten, i.e. those who believe that Jesus is the Christ. Loving God our Father and obeying His Word and commandments result in this love for fellow believers.

The letter then goes on to assert that the faith of believers gives them the power to win a spiritual victory over the world. And this faith is in the person of Jesus, who "came through water and blood" – water referring to His baptism when the Spirit descended on Him, and blood referring to the shedding of His blood on the cross.

Gospel Reading

John 20:19-31

Today's Gospel reading highlights two victories – Jesus entrusting His disciples with the spread of His message after His resurrection and how an imperfect faith can be a precursor to a stronger and more committed one.

After Jesus' death, His disciples were hiding in fear of arrest and punishment. Yet days later, He appears in their midst miraculously, conveys His peace upon them and sends them to preach His Gospel:

"As the Father has sent Me so I send you." Then, He breathes upon them the Holy Spirit, giving them the power to forgive sins.

In contrast, Thomas who was not with the other disciples at that time, found it difficult to believe that Jesus had actually risen from the dead. He needed direct physical evidence. Jesus' words to Thomas when He appeared later to him is just as applicable for us modern-day believers as it was for that disciple some 2,000 years ago: "Do not be unbelieving, but believe."

Nevertheless, in Thomas' struggle and final acceptance of the Resurrection, his faith is strengthened and deepened. His assertion of *"My Lord and my God"* is one of the most powerful affirmations of faith in the Gospel which continues to inspire Christians all over the world.

THOUGHTS

Central to the readings today is the power of Jesus' resurrection manifesting itself – firstly in His appearance to His disciples who had hidden themselves for fear of suffering the same fate as their Master and the description of the Spirit at work in the early Christian community.

In the Gospel reading, it is quite clear that death has no power over Jesus who is able to walk into the locked room where the disciples were huddled. He sends them on their mission to spread the Gospel and gives them the power to forgive sins.

A powerful teaching moment arises in Thomas' encounter with the Risen Lord. When we refer to Thomas as "doubting Thomas", we should remember that he represents all of us "who have not seen" and struggle to believe. Jesus' words to Thomas, who doubted His resurrection – "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed" – are significant for all succeeding generations of Christians who have not had the privilege of seeing Jesus the way His disciples had. Jesus assures all of us that we are in no way at a disadvantage compared to the original disciples who saw, heard and touched Him. We are blessed because we believe, though we have not seen Him in the flesh.

The First and Second Readings show that the Spirit of the Risen Lord is unstoppable as it flows into the early Christian community, where He inspires the believers to support one another materially as well as spiritually. The community assumes the nature of a spiritual family overcoming distinctions based on wealth and socio-economic status, where love for one another flows from the love of God our Father. It thus provides a model of Christian living for subsequent generations of Christians to emulate.

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Reflect on the similarities and differences between the early Church community described in today's readings and your own small Christian community. Are members "of one heart and mind"? How can members help one another even in their material needs?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

How can we build a community similar to that of the early Church community between ministry

members and those we reach out to?

What are the areas that we can work on?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

In our family, the domestic Church, how do we continue to show love and respect for one another, knowing that we are all begotten by God our Father? How do we deal with disagreements and misunderstandings in a respectful way?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

Take a moment to reflect on your faith in the light of today's Gospel. Are there areas that you feel need strengthening? If so, just like Thomas, proclaim to Jesus that He is your Lord and God, and ask Him to give you wisdom and insight into those areas of faith that you are struggling with.

Take Home

It takes humility and courage to build a community and to ask for a strengthening of one's faith.

Doing Your Bit

Pray to the Risen Lord to help you,

your family and your community build strong, loving relationships modelled on the early Church community.

Pray for a strong faith to overcome obstacles that may emerge along the way.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

we thank you for the glorious feast of Easter and the victory that Your Son has won for us on the cross. Grant us a strong faith and a heart that sees everyone as our brothers and sisters in Christ. It is only when we love one another as You love us that we can build true community animated by the Holy Spirit.

We ask all of this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and our God.
Amen.

The promised Word

OPENING PRAYER

Lord,

by the grace of Your resurrection, You have drawn us into the reality of our salvation. Give us a love for Your word and a deep longing for what You promise, so that despite the uncertainties of this world, our hearts may be focused on the lasting joy of Your kingdom.

Amen.

3RD SUNDAY OF EASTER

READINGS

First Reading

Acts 3:13-15, 17-19

The call to conversion cannot occur in a vacuum and Peter demonstrated this to great effect in this passage. His impassioned plea to the people to convert was based on the reality of salvation that comes from the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus. This is often referred to as the kerygma, the proclamation of the fullness of Jesus's life and mission, and reminds us that the reality of salvation is based on the reality of who Jesus is. The reaction to this reality can differ greatly, something that Peter acknowledged as he told of how Jesus was rejected and made to suffer. His preaching showed three things; how we are given the same second chance to repent, how the promise that Jesus made through His teaching was fulfilled and how that same promise also applies to us, as long as we accept this reality and live it in our lives.

Second Reading

1 John 2:1-5

The reality of God our Father's love is emphasised in this short exhortation. It begins with gentle encouragement not to sin which also comes with the reassurance that God our Father's love and

mercy is there as long as we are willing to accept it. This acceptance cannot be mere intellectual assent as we're also told that we know God our Father only by keeping His commandments. Knowing and loving God our Father thus entails us acting on this, obeying the commandments and living lives of loving action. By doing this, we live the reality of God our Father's love and allow it to emerge in those whom we love and serve. All this is made possible by continued presence of Jesus, who not only took our sins away but advocates for us and shows us what it truly means to act with love.

Gospel Reading

Luke 24:35-48

This post-resurrection encounter between Jesus and His disciples is significant in how we are assured of His presence with us. There are no less than three instances of how the reality of Jesus's presence was shown to the incredulous disciples – they saw Him as He stood among them, they were invited to touch Him, and He received a piece of fish and ate it in front of them. While His presence in this encounter can be reassuring for the disciples, but if we look from the quality aspect of the presence, it can bring us to a deeper level. Jesus was not just there to show that He had risen from the dead but His

words and presence opened their minds to understand scripture and His teaching. He showed them how He is truly the fulfilment of all the promises made before. He ended this by telling the disciples that they were all witnesses to this, bidding them to be this same presence to all whom they meet in the future.

THOUGHTS

There was a fundamental change in reality that came with Christ's resurrection. Prior to this momentous event, we heard of prophets who pointed towards the promise of salvation, describing it in detail. Jesus' ministry of teaching and healing was about this same promise, preparing us all to receive it. This promise was fulfilled with the resurrection which, as we heard in the Exsultet during the Easter Vigil, "dispels wickedness, washes faults away, restores innocence to the fallen." This wonderful truth of our reality can be lost on us if we look only at what is said about the promise and do not fully live in this reality.

The key to living this reality is delving deep into the promise and to connect with the One who fulfilled this promise of salvation. Only then would we be able to recognise that this promise is not an abstract one but made concretely to each and every one of us. The key to this is in accepting Jesus' continued presence with us, a presence that He so lovingly shared with the disciples after the resurrection. As we saw in

the Gospel, the acceptance of Jesus' presence led to great joy, a joy that is lasting but which can also be a little disconcerting. We see how the disciples reacted with alarm and doubt, which probably came from not fully understanding Jesus' promise of salvation. It's the same with us as we struggle to live this reality, bringing our faith and joy in direct confrontation with situations that can be counter to this.

Also, we remember another promise Jesus made during His public ministry – that of continued presence with us. The physical connection that He made with the disciples strengthened them in their ability to preach and heal. Peter being one of the prime examples of this. We should also seek to deepen our faith through regular encounters with the Lord who saves us, encounters that can come through prayer and the sacraments, but also through our loving service of our neighbours, recognising that we meet the Lord through them too.

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

The disciples who gathered in the upper room were the first small Christian community. Fearful at the start and filled with zeal to witness to the truth of the Lord's

promise after encountering Him, it's significant to consider how this encounter occurs in the community. How have we encountered Jesus as a community?

Jesus came into the upper room on His own but there were many moments during His public ministry where He was invited to join in the fellowship. Consider how Jesus has been invited into the community and the ways in which this has helped the community's growth?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Consider the words of Peter and how we have been, in our own different ways, proclaiming the mystery of Christ to each other. Share how we have been moved by the proclamations of others.

The work of ministry can also be making this proclamation in very different ways. How have we, as a ministry, been active in proclaiming the mystery of the resurrection?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

A common lament in many modern families is the lack of time spent

with each other. The encounter with Christ brought joy to the disciples just as the presence of each other can be a similar source of joy. How has Christ's presence been a source of joy to our family? The disciples saw Jesus, were invited to touch His hands and feet, and shared a meal with Him. These were concrete indications of presence. What would these concrete indications look like in our family and how can we share them more?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

There is something freeing about repenting to God our Father who takes away our sins at the same time. It makes us focus more on God our Father's love and less on our own weaknesses. How have I experienced this freeing love of God our Father? How would I share this reality of God our Father's bountiful love to others?

Take Home

We are witnesses of God's promise of salvation. This means that we have to be conscious of how we witness to this promise – in our words and actions, as we seek to be exemplars of this promise to those we meet.

Doing Your Bit

We're often told to "practice what we preach" but how about "preaching what we practice?"

This comes as we seek earnestly to keep the commandments and to be loving followers of Christ in all aspects of our lives. There may

come a point when others become curious about our way of life, giving us the opportunity to be witnesses. That's where we can be modern day Peters, sharing about the kerygma and its importance to all aspects of our lives.

CLOSING PRAYER

We give you thanks, Lord, for Your presence with us and pray for the grace of continued sensitivity to You in our lives. Make us active sharers in Your promise and good witnesses to Your love in all that we say and do.

Amen.

WE NEED YOUR FEEDBACK

Thanks for using this booklet so far!

Has the booklet been easy to use? We would really love to hear from you. What could have made your experience better?

Let us know!



one.org.sg/feedback

The Authority of the Word

OPENING PRAYER

Almighty Father in heaven,
give us strength from the courage of Christ our Shepherd, to
follow examples of the saints in heaven and to do Your will.
We pray this in Jesus' most holy name.

Amen.

4TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

READINGS

First Reading Acts 4:8-12

St. Peter addresses the Jewish rulers and leaders who are called to be the builders of the spiritual house of God our Father. He refers to Psalm 118 which is the last psalm in the Great Hallel that is sung during the Passover meal and points out to the Pharisees that Jesus is the cornerstone rejected by these builders. A direct rebuke that has not come out from the blue. In bearing witness to the Resurrection and performing the first miracle, St. Peter and the Apostles first faced their trials of being mocked and jailed. They now stand so confidently to proclaim Jesus “whom God raised from the dead” despite the risk of losing their lives. This bold declaration is borne from knowing that only obedience to Jesus, Saviour and Lord, will save them and not blind faith in religious laws. The same goes for us.

Second Reading 1 John 3:1-2

St. John reminds the Christian community that God the Father has conferred on them the immense privilege of being called children of God our Father. He points out that it is the Father’s great love which makes us truly become His children through the saving work of

Jesus, Son of God. We are children of God our Father not just in name or merely as a title of honor. For we are not merely forgiven; we are adopted by God our Father so that our lives are in relationship with Him. This present reality for Christians has consequences, as we do not belong to the world which does not accept Jesus. Abiding in this divine relationship must bring about changes in us, even in our present circumstances, as we stand in bold confidence that we will see Him face to face. Our greater salvation is yet to come; we will change to become like Jesus the Son of God.

Gospel Reading John 10:11-18

This chapter follows from Jesus’ healing of the man born blind and the rejection of this miracle by the Jewish leaders who question Jesus’ authority to heal. Jesus contrasts two groups of people: shepherds and hirelings. The hired shepherd is merely doing a job and abandons the sheep in the face of danger. The Pharisees are like the hirelings who are not able to lead the people into relationship with God the Father because they seek their own glory. The actions of the good shepherd are based upon the relationship developed between the shepherd and the sheep. This is at the heart of the difference in actions

between the good shepherd and the hireling. The good shepherd knows the sheep and, therefore, acts out of love. He will risk and lay down His life for His sheep; this love is integral to His identity.

THOUGHTS

The glory of God our Father is revealed in the Good Shepherd seen through Jesus' fidelity to and sacrifice for the children of God our Father. With the Word of God active and alive in the lives of the Apostles, they are like the sheep having the Good Shepherd watching over them. Therefore, they in turn, have the courage to lay down their lives to care for the children of God our Father. Jesus had already spoken: "... *for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you*" (Mat10:20). The Apostles' boldness is borne out of the joy that "*we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard*" (v20) found further in the passage. The freedom they experience as children of God our Father fills them with courage and hope to fulfill the Great Commission as Jesus has commanded.

Similarly, for us as His children, we will be protected and led to fulfilment. Do we look at ourselves, our lives and our community through the eyes of the Word of God? How often do we miss seeing the Good Shepherd beckoning us. Only in Jesus, we come to a

deeper experience and joy of being children of God our Father. For to abide in a divine relationship with God the Father is to receive from Him everything. In difficult and confusing times, we can thrive in our circumstances living as children of God our Father because of the hope of seeing Him as He is. We may not always fully succeed but we will find ourselves empowered in confidence through the Holy Spirit. We may be emboldened to see ourselves changed and give of ourselves freely as the Word of God has commanded.

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What are we doing as a community to be more deeply formed in the Word of God so that we may find the compassion of the Good Shepherd to care for our community members?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What is our commitment to prayer and scripture as individual and ministry?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Who is the shepherd in the family and who is the hireling?

Does the family listen to this shepherd?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

Do you have a 'shepherd' in your spiritual life to help you grow your relationship with God our Father?

How can you deepen your relationship with God our Father this Easter?

Take Home

Jesus, our Good Shepherd is beckoning us to rise above the self-centredness that confines and narrows us, to the outgoing love which expands our hearts and minds, as our hearts and minds grow to be like the heart and mind of Jesus.

Doing Your Bit

Jesus invites us to trust Him in all the events of our life. Think about those areas that you find it hard to trust God our Father. Talk to Jesus about these things, and listen to what He says through prayers and reading the Word of God. Journal them down.

CLOSING PRAYER

Living God,

Your Son made Himself known to His disciples in the breaking of bread. Open the eyes of our faith, that we may see Him in all His redeeming work; who is alive and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Amen

Abide in the Word

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

we thank You and praise You for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. As we abide in Jesus, may we never forget to speak of the Lord's saving power and redemptive act on the cross. Grant us the courage to let the Word of God mould and move us to be Good News to others.

Amen.

5TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

READINGS

First Reading Acts 9:26-31

In this reading, Paul is back in where he started - in Jerusalem where as Saul, he was persecuting Jesus' disciples. That zealous pursuit led him to an encounter with the Risen Lord on the road to Damascus. Now, he is back in Jerusalem a changed man from that encounter with a new purpose and a new mission. It is not easy coming into the community where memories of being persecuted is fresh and trust does not come easy. Helped by Barnabas, Paul endured and remained focus on being God our Father's instrument. Thus, beginning his journey to carry God our Father's name to the Gentiles.

Second Reading 1 John 3:18-24

This text continues on the theme on the love of God our Father found in the Gospel of John. In order to remain in the love of God our Father, we need to love in concrete ways. It really means that if we truly love another person, this love will produce loving actions. That is how we remain in God our Father's love. The writer of this epistle tells us that we can be certain of this when we believe in Jesus Christ and have love for one another. Even if we have doubts at times, if

we remain steadfast in believing in Jesus Christ and loving others, God our Father remains in us by the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Reading John 15:1-8

The relationship between Jesus Christ and His disciples is more than just close. It is a vital link to the continuous growth in faith for each of the follower of Christ, *'for cut off from me you can do nothing'*. (v5) This is one of the key themes in John's gospel - faith in the person of Jesus Christ. Apart from Jesus Christ, the Christian faith is dead. Remain in Christ to continue to grow and flourish. Abiding in Jesus Christ is truly fundamental because without it, there is no faith and no relationship with God our Father.

THOUGHTS

Grapevines can grow for more than 100 years. It is the branches that are cut and pruned away to produce grapes. Jesus, by using the vine and branches imagery conveys a strong and comforting message - that when we are grafted onto the vine by our baptism, it is a strong and everlasting relationship that God our Father wants us to enjoy. The Easter event redeems us and draws us 'in Christ' so that we become a new creation. Just like Paul who encountered Jesus

and became a new person, we too, are made new by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Having experienced the unexpected love and mercy from Jesus Christ, it would not be right if we do not do anything about it. If we love the Lord, we would keep His commandment and His word to be His disciples. We would be concerned with the concerns of the Master and do what is necessary to please the Lord, having received His love and mercy. Abiding in Christ is not a passive act of merely obliging. It has the undertone of bearing and enduring. We can joyfully bear and endure because we have experienced this tremendous and unexplainable love of Jesus Christ.

By abiding in Jesus Christ, we are remaining in the Word of God, letting this Word direct all our coming and going. The Word of God will abide in us (v7) when we do that and we will truly glorify God the Father bearing fruits aplenty. *'Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away'* (Mt 24:35). The Word of God is the solid vine that gives the nourishments and the growth to the branches. By choosing to remain in Christ and actively taking actions directed by the Word, we continue to grow in faith.

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Is the Word of God at the heart of the life of your community?
How can every member of the community draw life from the Word of God?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Does our ministry have the discipline of reading the Word of God?

How much of our work in the ministry is directed by the Word of God? What can be done to do better?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Who is the shepherd in the family and who is the hireling?
Does the family listen to this shepherd?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

Does the Word of God direct all aspects of your life? What can you do to cleave onto the Word so as to grow deeper in your relationship with the Word of God?

Take Home

Abide in the Word of God for sustenance and growth. Remain in Christ and let the Word of God give guidance and direction.

Doing Your Bit

Share with others how the Word of God 'is alive and active' in your life. For example, how the Word of God gives comfort or strength at different occasions to draw us closer to Him.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear Jesus, the eternal Word of God.

Thank You for always drawing us ever closer to You. Give us the grace to respond by coming close and remain in You for guidance and for growth. Grant us the grace to see those who are in need of Your words and offer them the living Word of God.

Amen.

The Word is for Everyone

OPENING PRAYER

Dearest Lord Jesus,

Your Resurrection has given us new life and shown us a new love that frees us from sin. May this love touch us deeply so that we can truly believe that we are sinners yet loved. May this awareness liberate us to love ourselves and others more fully. Help us to be more aware of the ways in which we reject Your love and remain in sin. Free our hearts so that we may love like You and be fully alive.

Amen.

6TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

READINGS

First Reading

Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

The first reading states unequivocally that God our Father does not discriminate. It must be noted that during this time, Jews believed that other nations were outside the mercy of God our Father. A strict Jew would in fact have no contact with a Gentile. So when Peter invited the emissaries of Cornelius in and offered them hospitality, and he himself subsequently entered the house of Cornelius, a Gentile, thresholds were crossed symbolically and barriers were beginning to break down. God our Father's ultimate stand as having no favourites was then fully revealed when the Holy Spirit was poured out to Cornelius and his friends as they began speaking in tongues, a final proof that God our Father gives His Spirit to both pagans and Jews. If the Holy Spirit sees them as fit to be filled with His presence and voice, then there can be no barriers to baptism.

Second Reading

1 John 4:7-10

In this short passage, the word "love" (and its derivatives), appears nine times, leaving no doubt as to its core message: God is love.

How do we know this loving God? By what he has done for us. Jesus is Love Incarnate, God becoming human, a love shown through deed and not mere words. This act of love offers us the hope of redemption to heal a broken relationship. We may be sinners, but we are loved sinners. Freed by love, we are also freed to love.

Gospel Reading

John 15:9-17

Like the second reading, the word "love" also appears nine times in the gospel reading, leaving no doubt as to its central message. We are reminded to stay rooted to the Source of love, the True Vine referred to in the earlier verses. This Love becomes the inspiration for us to love others in the same way that we are loved by God our Father. This is love shown through deed and sacrifice – to love one another is to lay down one's life for our friends. If not, we become merely branches of the Vine that do not bear fruit. The love of Christ should humble us, because we were chosen by Him. In calling us His friends, Jesus further offers us the grace of intimacy. If we are freed from sin by love, then we are called to reciprocate His love and to be freed to love one another in the same way.

THOUGHTS

A parable goes that a student wished to discover the secret to heaven from his teacher. The wise man shared the secret. Filled with joy, the student got up excitedly with the intention of sharing this with everyone else. But he was cautioned by his teacher that if he revealed the secret, he would go to hell while everybody else went to heaven. Pausing only for a brief moment to reconsider, the student went out and shouted the secret to all who would hear anyway. His fellow students were enraged and reported this to their teacher, who came out looking for this errant student. Finding him, the teacher bowed at the feet of his student, giving reverence to someone who was willing to go to hell so everyone else could go to heaven.

This Sunday readings are all about love. This is a love that is shown through action and sacrifice. It is rooted in Christ and is other-centred, a love that lays down one's life for one's friends. It is the same total, self-emptying and self-giving love that we see reflected on the cross.

Over the past year during the pandemic, we have seen many incarnations of this love – selfless healthcare workers putting their lives at risk to tend to the sick, thoughtful individuals delivering food to their quarantined neighbours and kind strangers sheltering stranded foreigners.

We are reminded that God our Father does not discriminate in the first reading and challenged to break down those barriers in our hearts that cause us to live discriminatory lives.

Christ's example on the cross invites us to love like Him. Genuine sacrificial love is not the romantic love we read in novels and see on the screen. It is love in spite of what we feel, taking the risks and aware of the consequences because we only want what is best for others.

Having encountered Love in such a profound way through Lent and into Easter, we are liberated to love as Christ loves.

Am I willing to go through hell so that others might experience heaven?

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

God our Father does not discriminate. Let us ask ourselves if we discriminate, in obvious and in subtle ways. Why do I discriminate, and what will free me from such behaviour?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

God our Father has no favourites. As we continue in our ministry, let us ask ourselves if we carry and hold on to biases and prejudices within our ministry, and in the way we minister to others. How might I learn to treat everyone equally?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

Love is more than just feelings. In what ways have I failed to show my love through action? In what ways can I demonstrate my love for my family in more obvious ways?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

Christ has redeemed me on the Cross, demonstrating the width and depth of His love for me. Do I accept or reject this love? If I have accepted this love, how then am I invited to love others in the same way that Christ loves? If I have rejected this love, what is preventing me from embracing it more fully?

Take Home

God is love, and Jesus is Love Incarnate. May I never take for granted what Jesus did for me in giving Himself so selflessly so that I may have new life. Let me never doubt who I am in God our Father's eyes, so that I can allow myself to be loved and to love others.

Doing Your Bit

Write a short note about who Jesus is to you and how you have encountered His love. Post it on social media and share it with someone either through email or in person, whom you feel needs to encounter the love of Christ.

CLOSING PRAYER

Dearest Lord Jesus,

thank You for loving us so completely as to give Your life for us. May Your death and resurrection remind us that we are each Your beloved and so let go of any resistance to this truth. Having embraced this truth, we may learn to love ourselves and others more fully. Just as You gave Your life for us, show us how and where we might be life for others. May our love as seen through our actions draw others to You and bring You glory.

Amen.

The Word is Living and Active

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

You have helped us through and into the different circumstances of our lives. We thank You for the gift of Your Word revealing our past, present, and future. We ask for Your light to open our hearts, so that we may be able to see You more clearly. Help us to learn to love You, our neighbours and ourselves more purely. Through Jesus and in union with the Holy Spirit, we pray.

Amen.

7TH SUNDAY OF EASTER

READINGS

First Reading

Acts 1:15-17, 20-26

It is hard to notice in this passage, but it was still a time of confusion and uncertainty for the disciples of Jesus. The Lord had just left them. He had hinted at a mission. Yet they were not supposed to leave Jerusalem. Instead, they were told to wait for the Holy Spirit and they did not know for how long. Stuck in the upper room with the 11 remaining apostles were other followers, friends and relatives of Jesus – even Mary, His mother. The number, 120, suggests a fulfilment of the mission of the 12 ancient tribes of Israel.

There is much in this passage implying a sense of purpose for their circumstances. Phrases like *“the scriptures had to be fulfilled,”* *“the Holy Spirit foretold,”* and *“for it is written,”* all convey a divine alignment to God our Father’s plan, and that the choosing of Matthias would continue and fulfill His purpose.

Second Reading

1 John 4:11-16

The first letter of John seems to have been written to strengthen the early Christian community. The earlier part of the chapter talks about discernment and testing the

authenticity of the messages which claimed to be Christian, and then moves on to this passage dwelling on love and how ‘God is love’.

The struggle which tests any growing faith is the question: ‘Where is God?’ The author acknowledges this struggle of most people not having seen God our Father and assures them that they have. ‘God is love’, so if we can sense love from one another and, especially, create love for one another, we get to see God our Father.

In the spiritual imagination of the ancient world, spirits lived in everything, whether it is inanimate objects, animals and even nature. For human beings though, simply by loving one another, we allow the spirit of God our Father to live in us, allowing the world to see God our Father.

Gospel Reading

John 17:11-19

In this passage from the Gospel of John, we are privy to the great prayer of Jesus at Gethsemane before he is arrested. He has just come from a meal with those for whom He cares dearly. Yet, he is fearful and anxious. He has a sense of what is about to happen to Him, and to them.

Like the head of a family about to pass on in the world, Jesus remembers those who have become His family, and he reflects on what might happen once He is no longer around – division, conflict, and separation weigh on His mind. Like any person, He would want His family to be united and joyful. However, somehow this seems bigger than just the apostles at the Last Supper. If Jesus was sent into the world to this family, that means He was sent to us. We are the ones He is praying for.

THOUGHTS

Simply phrased, the themes in our readings today are about alignment to the divine plan, love as our connection to God our Father, and fostering unity in this world. These are deep notions, difficult enough to ponder, and even tougher to carry into action. Just how are we supposed to think about these core Christian concepts, how do they elaborate on each other, and more so, how might we live them out in our lives?

The first reading's message of divine alignment already challenges us. It conveys the events that led to Jesus' betrayal and death as not merely happening to Jesus, but happening for Jesus, so that God our Father's will would be fulfilled. Adopting this lens, the apostles begin looking at their own circumstances in the same way. Their uncertain predicament, that sense of being stuck and not

knowing what would happen next, became a moment for reflection, discovery, and making decisions that would more deeply align them to God our Father's plan.

That realignment of perception opens us up to what has happened for us, as an outcome of God our Father's immense love for us. Wherever we are, even interiorly, He has loved us to that space. This means He is there, as we hear in the second reading, in that space with us and with each other. To love one another is to share that space, however differently God our Father inhabits it in each one of us, and in so doing we find that crucial unity Jesus prays for in the Gospel.

The word is living and active. Do we trust that God our Father's plan is always at work in the world, always acting, and pouring out – even if we have to wait for it? We align ourselves to this plan by living out that outpouring, being active in love. Through our actions of love, we live in God our Father, He lives in us, and we become united. We become one, not just with each other but with God our Father as well.

What a prime example of nature we are, as human beings, if by loving one another, God our Father actually lives in us!

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What has happened to our community that is hard to believe it happened for us?

Where do we see the Word of God being active and guiding us and those around us?

How are we fostering unity within our community through the lives that we lead?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What has happened to us (or to those we serve), that is hard to believe it happened for us (or for them)?

How much do we rely on the Word of God in our lives and in those we serve?

How are we fostering unity within our ministry and the world around us?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What has happened to us or another family member that is hard to believe it happened for us or them?

How much do we really live by the Word of God as a family?

How are we fostering unity in our family? How can we bring about a deeper sense of unity?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

What has happened to me in my life that is hard to believe it happened for me?

How do I live my life that the Word of God is living and active in me?

How am I at one or not at one within myself?

Take Home

God our Father's divine plan is to love us. When I act on love for others, I am aligned to His divine plan and God our Father lives in me.

Doing Your Bit

See a friend from a different faith as being where God our Father has loved them to be.

Appreciate that God our Father lives in them also and not just you.

Without talking about God our Father this time, just love them together with God our Father who lives in you.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

we thank You for this time of quiet thought and reflective answers. We pray for the lens of alignment to Your holy will, that through Your love in us, we may bring about the unity that Your Son prays for. We pray with Him, through Your Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Celebrating the Word

OPENING PRAYER

Blessed are You Lord God!

You who are the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit of Joy, and the Spirit of Love; blessed are You! In Your presence we are in awe, as You graciously bestow on each of us gifts that we may use for Your glory. May we be filled with Your Holy Spirit that we may boldly proclaim Your Love to others.

Amen.

PENTECOST SUNDAY

READINGS

First Reading Acts 2:1-11

The day of Pentecost, the 50th day after the Passover, was one of the three great feasts for the Jews. It commemorates the giving of the law to Moses on Mt. Sinai, 50 days after the Exodus from Egypt. Jewish males were legally obligated to participate in this feast and would be the reason why “they were all in one place together” (2:1). The images of wind and fire are used to depict the coming of the Holy Spirit and are used in the Old Testament to depict the presence of God our Father in various encounters. The tongues of fire parallels especially the theophany at Mt. Sinai when Moses received the Ten Commandments from the Lord. (Ex 19:18) Here, the Holy Spirit descends in flames again to empower them to proclaim the new covenant to others. Verses 6 and 11 expresses explicitly that the ‘different tongues’ were that of different languages covering different nations and regions. This symbolises the mission of the Church that is to be spread beyond Israel, to the rest of the world.

Second Reading Galatians 5:16-25

After preaching about faith and liberty, St. Paul begins to teach

the Galatians how to live ethically and responsibly. In the opening statement of this passage, he clearly states that one needs to be “living by the Spirit” in order to be able to live in the freedom that Christ brings. He contrasts between the spirit and the flesh and how being “guided by the Spirit” means that one is not under the law. This implies that in our freedom, we can choose between the law of the flesh and the spirit, but that if we choose to be consumed by the flesh we lose our freedom. St. Paul then writes a list of vices (deliberate actions of the flesh) and the opposing virtues (the fruits of the Spirit) with love heading the list. He emphasises that the intrinsic desire of the flesh have been crucified together with Christ and that if we are led by the Spirit, we will have nothing to fear.

Gospel Reading John 15:26-27; 16:12-15

St John recounts Jesus reminding the disciples that as His chosen disciples they belong to Him and no longer to the world. With that liberation and renewed identity, the world will persecute and hate them just as it had persecuted and hated the Master. However, the witnessing to the world cannot stop. The Advocate, the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus will carry on the work and continue to witness to

Jesus, so the disciples are to do the same. The way to carry on this work is found in the second part of the passage that talks about the Spirit of Truth that will come. Jesus' statement that the disciples 'cannot bear it now' refers to them being unable to understand the weight of that truth just yet. He then promises that things will change and that the Spirit will 'guide (them) to all truth'. The root of the Greek word for 'guide' depicts an imagery of being led along a path. This symbolises that the disciples' understanding of the truth will be a continual process and that the Spirit will be the guiding force through deeper understanding of Christ's revelation to them.

THOUGHTS

On this day in which we commemorate the Holy Spirit descending upon us, these three passages highlight how the Spirit enables us to celebrate the liberation that Christ brings to us. The first reading of the Pentecost event reminds us (through the gushing wind) that the Holy Spirit is embodied in us through the breath of God our Father when we were created through His Word. This Spirit resides inside of us like a flame, living and moving, sometimes growing larger with fiery passion, sometimes simmering and flickering. This is the very Spirit that is to help us with our mission to 'make disciples of all nations', to be able to speak to others about Jesus, the Word that sets us free. The key thing in

this well-known encounter of the disciples being able to speak in different languages is that they were speaking in a language that the other person (a non-disciple) understood. There are many ways to preach, many ways to share about the Love of God our Father, but if we speak only in one language, we will not be participating much in our mission. If we only focused on one way that Christ 'must' be received, many will not understand us and may even be turned away. It is when we speak in different languages that more people will come to know the Word of God and experience the liberation that comes with that.

The second reading about the fruits of the Spirit then teaches us what these languages are. The language of love and the virtues that directly oppose the vices that are of the world. The very fact that we are humans born into a broken world immerses us into that inclination to sin, and this passage teaches us that in order for us to speak the different languages through the Holy Spirit, we need to allow Him to lead our lives. In our words, in our actions, to live according to these fruits. For example, in a situation of greed when we are faced with a necessary want for more, we consciously ask the Holy Spirit to guide us with the language of self-control and joy. Another example would be when we are angry, to invoke the guidance of the Holy Spirit to focus on the fruit of gentleness and peace. In this way, we can truly speak the many

languages of the Holy Spirit that is the essence of the Word - Love.

Through the Gospel of today, we know that this is a continual journey. The Spirit is our Advocate, who walks with us, guides us, and teaches us but it will not be an easy path. We, as humans, are just not capable of receiving the vast understanding and depth of wisdom that the Spirit has. So in order for us to face the world, and to bring the love of God our Father into the world, we need to continually make decisions in every situation and constantly choose the Truth that is of the Spirit. This then will be a life that is liberated and truly free.

REFLECTION

For Small Christian Communities

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

In what ways can we as a community speak different languages to others to bring them to the love of God our Father? What are some of the fruits of the Spirit that have been borne in this community?

For Ministry

We talk about what struck us in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What language should we speak through the ministerial work that we

do so that others may experience the love of God our Father? How can we as a ministry allow the Holy Spirit to guide us?

For Family

Let us as a family share about what stood out in the passages of scripture.

Let us share a bit about the scripture that we have just heard.

What are some of the fruits that others can see through our family? What are some of the fruits that we can focus on as a family?

For Individual

Spend some time reflecting on the passages of scripture.

If you would share about the scripture text with someone, what would you share?

What are the different ways that I can share about the Love of God our Father so that others may come to know Him?

What are some of the fruits that I have produced in my life?

What are the fruits that I need to focus on to help in my living of a Christian life?

Take Home

For us to live a life of liberation, we need to allow the Holy Spirit to lead us in our words and actions so that we may bring others to the same liberation and love.

Doing Your Bit

Choose one or two fruits of the

Spirit that you will like to focus on in your life. Consciously invite the graces of God our Father every morning to enable you to live in this fruit. Remember to journal

constantly to be able to witness the progress of bearing this fruit.

CLOSING PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

we praise and thank You for the love You give to us abundantly. You will never leave us orphans, and You have sent us Your Spirit to walk with us in this world. May we always be attuned to Him and continue to seek His guidance even when the world seems to consume us. May we continually seek to be Your disciples as Your Word has taught us and always strive to bring others to You. We make this prayer through Christ our risen Lord,

Amen.

MY EASTER REFLECTION JOURNAL

WHAT COULD WE HAVE DONE BETTER?

Thanks for using this booklet!

We hope that the reflections have helped you and your community to grow in faith. Did this booklet meet your expectations? What else would you like to see in future booklets?

Your feedback is important to us. Let us know!



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APPENDIX

FASTER ACTIVITIES

CELEBRATING SUNDAYS OF FASTER

FASTER SUNDAY

Celebrate Easter with Mass on Easter Vigil together with family members and friends.

2ND SUNDAY OF FASTER - DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Pray the Divine Mercy chaplet together with family members or communities. Remember especially those who are sick.

3RD SUNDAY OF FASTER

Plant something with your family. (Refer to Faith Seedlings Activity)

4TH SUNDAY OF FASTER - WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Pray for a priest in the archdiocese for 365 days starting from this Vocation Sunday.

5TH SUNDAY OF FASTER - MOTHER'S DAY

Pray the Rosary in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God and pray especially for mothers.

6TH SUNDAY OF FASTER

Make a nine days novena prayer to the Holy Spirit from Ascension Thursday to Pentecost Sunday.

7TH SUNDAY OF FASTER - WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

Tell others about Jesus. Proclaim the Good News that God never ceases to be a Father in any situation or with regard to any person. Let us learn to communicate trust and hope.

PENTECOST SUNDAY

- Encourage everyone to wear red for the Eucharistic Celebration on this Sunday.
- Compose a thoughtful handwritten note for your child or spouse. Place it under their pillow or in a place they will find on their own.
- Attend the Pentecost Sunday Rally with a friend.

FAMILY EASTER ACTIVITY: FAITH SEEDLINGS

Use this family Easter activity to sprout a seed this spring as the perfect reminder of the new life we have in Jesus as his children.

You will need:

- seeds,
- paper towels,
- plastic bag,
- water and
- a Bible.

1. Have each of your family member place four seeds in a folded piece of paper towel.
2. Place the paper towel and seeds inside a plastic bag. Leave the plastic bag open.
3. Moisten—but don't swamp—the towels and place the seed baggies in a sunny area.
4. Have different family members care for the seedlings each day.
5. Read aloud 1 Corinthians 3:6-9 and discuss how your family's seedlings are like or unlike each family member's faith growth and development.

CELEBRATING PENTECOST - TONGUES OF FIRE - MOBILE SHEET

Adapted from William H. Sadler, Inc.

Bring the Good News of Jesus out into the world by making a mobile to show what you will do!

Materials:

1. Clothes hanger or a stick
2. Thread
3. Red colour construction paper
4. Magic pens

Methods:

1. Print the flames on the construction paper.
(See page 66)

2. Cut out the flames and decorate the flame with words or symbols that describe how you will use a gift of the Holy Spirit to spread the Good News of Jesus to others.
3. Punch a hole in the top of the flame and run a thread through it.
4. Knot the thread and hang the flame on a cloth hanger or stick.



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WRITER & EDITORIAL TEAM

Agnes Ngou
Angelia Boey
Anthony Siow
Basil Kannangara
Christopher Khoo
Daphne Leong
Rev. Fr. Gerard Louis
Isabel Ho
Joy Tan
Sheila Fong
Rev. Fr. Stanley Goh, SJ
Rev. Fr. Terence Pereira

TRANSLATIONS:

Archdiocesan Commission for the Apostolate of Mandarin-speaking (ACAMS)
Archdiocesan Commission for Tamil-speaking (ACTS)

DESIGNER:

Rae Chia



enquiries.one@catholic.com.sg



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[Office for the New Evangelisation](https://www.youtube.com/OfficefortheNewEvangelisation)



[@evangelise.sg](https://www.instagram.com/evangelise.sg)

2 Highland Road #02-19 Singapore 549102

Tel: +65 6911 0429 | Website: one.org.sg