



December
Edition

木 THE 匠 CARPENTER

32nd Edition, December 2024



JESUS

Our Hope



A SAVIOUR IS BORN

WISHING ALL PARISHIONERS A BLESSED CHRISTMAS
AND A GRACE-FILLED NEW YEAR.

MAY WE BE A PEOPLE OF FAITH
REJOICING IN THE LIGHT AND HOPE
THAT CHRISTMAS BRINGS.



ON THE COVER
Jesus our Hope
by Valerie Delgado of Pax.Beloved

木 THE CARPENTER

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JUBILEE 2025

Pilgrims of Hope in Community

Pope Francis opened the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica for the Jubilee of Mercy on December 8, 2015. *Photo: Vatican News.*

FOREWORD

Being Pilgrims of Hope

Advent. Adventus. Arrival. What, or who, is arriving? What can we expect when it arrives? Are we ready to receive the arrival?

This Advent will mark the start of the 2025 Jubilee Year, when Pope Francis would open the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica in Rome on 24 December. The theme for the year is "Pilgrims of Hope" and it marks the 2025th year anniversary of the Incarnation of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

We have many reasons to hope!

Advent, as we joyfully recall, commemorates the first coming of our Lord and Savior over 2,000 years ago. Yet, it also beckons us to eagerly prepare for His glorious Second Coming. This hope is not a passive or listless waiting, but a vibrant and joyful anticipation of the One who promises to "wipe every tear from our eyes" (Rev. 7:17).

I have witnessed the vibrant spirit of hope alive and thriving in our parish, particularly in the aftermath of the recent incident on November 9, when I was injured. It has been truly heartwarming to see our parish community come together in a remarkable display of unity and compassion. Not only have you lifted me up in prayer, but you have also shown tangible expressions of care and support for all those affected, demonstrating the power of hope in action. Your outpouring of love and kindness has been a testament to the resilience and strength of our parish family.

I ask for your continued prayers for all those who have been affected by this incident as well. Please know that you are also in my thoughts and prayers, and I ask God to bless and comfort you. May we all find strength and healing in His loving care.

As we give thanks to the Lord for 2024, let us continue to "hope in the LORD; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is abundant redemption." (Psalm 130:7)

Our parish theme for 2025 is "Pilgrims of Hope in Community". The parish has organised many events and programmes to help us be bringers of hope to each other. Let us remember that we are a community of believers, not disconnected individuals.

To that end, under the patronage of St Joseph, we must be hopeful that we can nourish faith in a loving, outreaching community. Only then, can we become as our Parish Vision states, a more vibrant, evangelising and missionary church.

Fr Christopher Lee
Parish Priest

UNITY HOPE

POPE FRANCIS SINGAPORE 2024

Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Pope Francis

With great anticipation, Catholics in Singapore awaited the visit of our Holy Father, Pope Francis, to our shores. Apart from the Papal Mass, our parishioners were also involved in several activities leading up to the Mass.

VOLUTEERS

Five thousand volunteers were enlisted to support the Papal Mass. Volunteers were deployed in various functions eg choirs, Eucharistic Ministers, altar servers, wardens, security personnel and general volunteers. Kudos to all who served at the Papal Mass.

These were the volunteers from our Parish :



Combined Choir



Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion



Security Team



Hospitality Ministry



Altar Servers

COMMUNITY WELCOME

To welcome our Holy Father upon his arrival, Catholics from all parishes prepared banners to greet him and waited eagerly at Jurassic Mile.

Pope Francis was greeted by 1,000 volunteers, who were mostly dressed in yellow and white, the colours of the Vatican flag.

Even a slight drizzle did not dampen the spirits of the crowd. As His Holiness made his way through in a buggy, they chanted "Viva, Viva, Papa Francesco" - which means "Long live Pope Francis".



BANNERS TO WELCOME OUR HOLY FATHER

Three banners were prepared and signed by our priests and parishioners.





PAPAL MASS





SJC Welcome Banner



SJC Seniors at Papal Mass



SJC Group at Papal Mass



Private Meeting with Religious



Chair at Main Church Sanctuary

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAPAL MASS

Twenty-four seniors were successful in their ballot to attend the Papal Mass. Anticipation was in the air as they felt that this was a rare opportunity for them to get to see our Holy Father in person. We were one of the first few Churches to arrive and despite the long hours, the seniors kept their spirits high throughout the event.

"I was very touched by the way he [our Holy Father] engages the young children as they are the ones who will be our future. Even though we did not get to see him close to us, yet we can feel his closeness to us."

- Stephen Lau

"I have been to Rome before but I never got to see the Pope in person. This was such a great opportunity. I am so happy that I get to see him."

- Patricia Lau

"My wife and I were very emotionally moved that we could see our Holy Father in person. We were really touched by his love for the churches in the East and his praises for the development of the faith and the responsibility of the governments. At this advanced age he took risks to travel to be with His flocks. Great effort!"

- William Teo

MEMENTO FROM THE EVENT: PAPAL CHAIR

One of the chairs which was used by the Holy Father at the Private Meeting with the Clergy and Consecrated Religious is now kept at the Sanctuary in our Main Church. A great reminder of this historic visit.

OUR GRATITUDE

We thank God for the gift of our Holy Father, Pope Francis to the Church and to the world. Let us continue to keep him in our prayers, so that he can continue to lead the Church with love, wisdom, strength and courage, and continue to be an inspiration to all the faithful.



FR AUGUSTINE TAY CELEBRATES HIS 50TH SACERDOTAL ANNIVERSARY



Glory and praise to the Lord on this great milestone of his priesthood vocation.

Fr Augustine Tay had been appointed Parish Priest at St Joseph's Church (Bukit Timah) from 1986 to 2002.

He celebrated his 50th Sacerdotal Anniversary at our Parish on Sunday, 24 November 2024 at the 5.30 pm evening Mass. The Mass was concelebrated by fourteen priests with religious and seminarians in attendance.

In the homily, Msgr Peter Zhang summed up Fr Tay's contributions to the parish into three key areas, namely, "Hardware, Software and Heartware", which left an indelible mark on our community.

HARDWARE – Fr Tay's vision, devotion and perseverance had enabled the construction of the Rectory (which houses the priest residence and parish office), the Parish Community Hall (where catechism classes, parish events and functions are held), the SJC Kindergarten (now the Little Shepherd's Schoolhouse), the Chapel of the Resurrection for funeral wakes and a columbarium.

The installation of the life-sized outdoor Stations of the Cross, which became the impetus for devotion and pilgrimage had also been undertaken by Fr Tay during his tenure.

SOFTWARE – Fr Tay had commissioned renowned Chinese artist, Prof Wu Yong Liang, to produce the priceless masterpieces of Christian paintings in Chinese ink-brush style. Two of these paintings, depicting the life of St Joseph, "The Nativity" and "The Flight to Egypt" have been installed at the wings of the Church.

Other works of art are located in the Parish Community Hall, "The Wedding Feast at Cana"; and at the Chapel of the Resurrection, "The Resurrection of Jesus." Another masterpiece,

“The Beatitudes” was presented to then Pope John Paul II and is now kept at the Vatican Museum. One copy has been retained at the Parish Office and it is now a third-class relic, signed by St John Paul II.

Fr Tay is a true 'man of culture' in every sense. Not only is he a devoted custodian of Catholic tradition, faithfully preserving the rich heritage of the traditional Latin Mass, but he also tenderly nurtures the cultural roots of the Chinese community by continuing to celebrate Masses in Teochew.

HEARTWARE – This is of utmost importance as it refers to the heart of a person. Msgr Zhang explained that he has known Fr Tay since the 1990s when he began his studies at the SFX Major Seminary, which was then located at Punggol. Knowing that the foreign seminarians do not return to their countries during the seminary breaks or holidays, Fr Tay took the initiative to invite them to stay at his Parish.

He also invited them to join him and his family for the Chinese New Year reunion dinner. This act of kindness left an indelible mark on Msgr Peter as it speaks of Fr Tay's loving concern for others, especially for the Chinese seminarians as the Chinese New Year reunion dinner is a special time when one thinks of family.

Prior to the final blessing and dismissal, Fr Tay encouraged the faithful to place their trust in the Almighty Father as he did to overcome overwhelming odds. He cited the instances where he had to deal with the issues of squatters on church land, rebuilding the old rectory which was unsafe and fixing the roof leaks in church with meagre funds available at that point of time. Fr Tay also added that the Good Lord watched over him as he went through those difficulties.

Many thanks to Fr Tay for his years of dedication and care towards his duties. May the Good Lord continue to bless and bestow upon Fr Tay the gifts that would enable him to remain in good health to carry out His work.





Marian

APPARITIONS IN ASIA

BY PETER LING

Our Lady of La Vang in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington D.C. *Photo by Tomasomi, Flickr*

Conversations on popular apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary often revolve around Lourdes in France and Fatima in Portugal, followed by Medjugorje in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Akita in Japan.

Curious about apparitions in other countries, I researched resources such as *Miracle Hunter*, the *Ultimate Guide to Marian Apparitions*, *The World of Marian Apparitions*, *The History and Science Behind Marian Apparitions* and the *International Marian Research Institute* of the University of Dayton in the United States of America.

I learned that there were over 2000 claimed apparitions in Europe, the Americas, the Middle East, Africa and Asia under various categories: Traditionally Approved (by local priests with building of a sanctuary followed by affirmations from bishops and Popes); Bishop Approved (investigated by local bishops and accepted as authentic without Vatican recognition); Bishop Approved with Vatican Recognition (only 16 apparitions are in this list, including Lourdes and Fatima but excluding Medjugorje and Akita); Coptic Approved (investigated by the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt); and Unapproved Apparitions since 1900 (with negative or no decisions made, plus some subsequently approved for private Faith Expression).

The Traditionally Approved category features apparitions in Asia that I have not been aware of! The Bishop Approved category includes Our Lady of Akita. Since bishop affirmation or approval has been accepted as authenticating the apparitions, I will focus on the Traditionally Approved/Bishop Approved apparitions in India, the Philippines, Vietnam, China and Japan.

INDIA

There were seven interesting apparition cases of Our Lady in India. In AD 105, the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to hungry shepherd children in the Indian town of Kuravilangad in Kerala. She transformed stones to bread, quenched the thirsty children with water from a miraculous spring which had sprouted in the drought-stricken area and requested a church to be built in the location. The Kuravilangad Church website describes the Blessed Virgin Mary as 'Muthiyamma' in Tamil and her other miraculous interventions.

Three supernatural events were reported in Vailankanni, a town in Tamil Nadu. The first was on 8 September 1550, when the Virgin Mary appeared to a poor shepherd boy who was carrying milk for his master and asked him for milk to feed her child Jesus. When the shepherd's master did not believe the story, the milk overflowed from the pot. The second was at the end of the 16th century, when Our Lady appeared to a crippled boy who was selling buttermilk to travellers and asked him for a cup for her baby Jesus. Our Lady healed the boy and told him to pass on a message to a Catholic man to build a chapel in her name. The community described Mary as 'Our Lady

of Good Health'. The third was on 8 September 1650, when Portuguese sailors were saved from a violent storm through Mary's intercession. The sailors then transformed the thatched chapel into a stone chapel. On 3 November 1962, Pope John XXIII raised the Shrine to the status of a Basilica.

Two other healings occurred, one in Goa in 1624 and the other in Vellangany in 1895. In Goa, Our Lady cured a Jesuit priest who had been poisoned and had asked for her intercession at his deathbed. In Vellangany, Our Lady healed a 12-year-old boy who was gravely ill.

The seventh apparition case was in Kallikulam in 1939 when Our Lady appeared to six young people. This incident was initially categorised under Unapproved Apparitions but was later approved for Faith Expression by Bishop Roch Victoria, who went to the apparition hill and blessed it with a commemorative plaque in 1941. A grotto was also constructed on the hill to honour Our Lady's apparition.

PHILIPPINES

Seven Marian apparitions were reported in the 17th century. In 1610, a farmer who was worried about raiders destroying his crops put his trust in God and Mother Mary to protect him and his family. Walking home one day, he saw a mysterious light and then the Virgin Mary on a cloud above a treetop, with a Rosary in one hand and her child Jesus in another hand. The Virgin Mary called his name and asked that a church be built on the site. The community initially referred to the Virgin Mary as Our Lady of Manaoag, which means The Lady Who Calls, and eventually Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary of Manaoag.

In 1611, Our Lady appeared twice to a slave girl in a stream of the Bingsacan area. First, Our Lady told her to return after joining the Confraternity of St Augustine. Second, Our Lady healed her eye illness so that she could see clearly. Miraculous healings from the stream water were reported after the apparitions.

Our Lady also appeared to two Jesuit priests. In 1616, Our Lady appeared to Jesuit priest Fr Francis Otazo when he prayed to her for protection against



1. Basilica of Our Lady of Good Health located at the town of Velankanni, India.
2. Night view of the Basilica facade.
3. Pilgrims walking on their knees towards the Church well where the first apparition had occurred.



4. Minor Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag located in Manaoag, Philippines.
5. The Virgin's appearance to the farmer, depicted on a mural.
6. Church interior. *Photos: Wikimedia Commons.*



The Garden in Carmel, Lipa, where the Lady Mediatrix of All Grace appeared to Sr Teresita Castillo. *Photo: Wikimedia Commons.*

pagans. Our Lady appeared again when he was having doubts about his mission and encouraged him to continue his apostolate work. In 1632, Our Lady appeared to Jesuit priest Antonio Andrade when he prayed for her intervention after being poisoned. He was healed and carried on with his missionary work.

Two intriguing apparitions also happened, one in Caysasay and the other in Cavite City.

In 1619, a native slave girl was gathering firewood and fetching water when she saw radiating brilliance from a gap in a rocky landscape. Many people then went to see the Lady of Caysasay and reported miraculous healings from the spring water. In 1692, the Virgin Mary appeared on a beach of Canacao Bay and then left behind a framed image of herself. Fishermen took the image to their parish priest who placed it in the church and subsequently built a chapel for it.

A Marian apparition case in the 20th century went through what some observers described as a 'ping pong' process of approval and rejection. Sr Teresita Castillo from the Carmelite Order in Lipa City reported several times in 1948 that she had encountered the Blessed Virgin, identified as 'Mediatrix of All Grace'. Local Bishop Alfredo Verzosa y Florentin approved veneration of the Mediatrix but six other bishops in the Philippine Church ruled negatively in 1951 and banned public display of the Mediatrix statue. In 1992, Archbishop of Lipa, Mariano Gaviola, lifted the ban after reports of rose petals falling from the sky into the Carmelite Convent and children seeing the statue of the Mediatrix coming

to life. With increased devotion to the Mediatrix, Archbishop Ramon C Arguelles lifted the ban on public veneration of the Mediatrix in 2009. Then in 2010, Vatican announced that the Lipa apparitions were not 'supernatural'. Despite Vatican's non-recognition, Archbishop Raymond C Arguelles stated in 2015 that the Lipa phenomenon was supernatural and 'worthy of belief'. The Holy See countered by declaring the archbishop's decree as null and void. Finally, the Catholic Bishop's Conference of the Philippines issued pastoral guidelines in July 2016, emphasising that private devotion to Our Blessed Mother Mary, Mediatrix of Grace, should not relate to the reported Lipa apparitions in 1948.

VIETNAM

When the Nguyen Dynasty persecuted over 100,000 Catholics in 37 parishes in 1798, many Christians took refuge in the La Vang jungle of Quang Tri province but died from the cold weather, wild beasts, starvation and sickness. When the survivors prayed the Rosary one night, the Blessed Mother appeared with the child Jesus and two angels. She told the survivors to boil the leaves of nearby trees and use the liquid as medicine.

The refugees built a chapel to honour the Blessed Mother, described as the Lady of La Vang. The location became a centre for pilgrims despite persecutions, which ended in 1886. The chapel evolved into a church and in 1961 Pope John XXIII elevated it to a Basilica. On 16 December 1997, Pope John Paul II celebrated the 200th Anniversary of the apparition.



Our Lady of La Vang statue built where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared near the ancient banyan tree. *Photo by Long Nguyễn, Flickr.*

CHINA

During the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, 10,000 soldiers attacked the Dong Lu mission set up by Vincentian priests. When hundreds of Catholics prayed for the Virgin Mary to save them, she appeared dressed in white in the sky. The frightened soldiers fired wildly and fled when a fiery angelic horseman chased them out of the village. The Dong Lu community built a church to thank the Virgin Mary for saving them.

Pope Pius XI blessed the official image of Our Lady of China in 1928 and approved Dong Lu as an official Marian Shrine in 1932. In 1942, Pope Pius XII included its feast day in the Catholic liturgical calendar. During the Vigil Mass on the Feast of Mary Help of Christians on 23 May 1995, the sun spun from right to left with rays of different shades appearing in the sky. People reported seeing Our Lady, the Child Jesus and the Holy Family.



The original statue image of "Our Lady of China" or "Our Lady of Donglü" (東閭聖母) constructed in Yaoyang, Hebei province, destroyed in 1966 during the Cultural Revolution. A similar painting was reconstructed in 1989 now in its place. *Photo: Wikimedia Commons.*

JAPAN

Sr Agnes Sasagawa of the Handmaids of the Eucharist in Akita reported Marian apparitions between 1973 and 1981. Soon after Sr Agnes joined the convent in May 1973, she saw a bright light from the chapel's tabernacle, received a stigmata



A carved wood statue at Our Lady of Akita Shrine. *Photo: Wikimedia Commons.*

in her left hand, encountered her guardian angel frequently, saw a wooden statue of the Virgin Mary ablaze in light, found a hand of the statue bleeding and witnessed the statue weeping many times (the statue wept 101 times, even when Sr Agnes was not present).

Although Sr Agnes was deaf, she received messages from the bleeding statue of Our Lady to pray the Rosary and do penance for world peace. A Korean woman was healed of her brain cancer after praying to Our Lady of Akita in 1981 and Sr Agnes herself regained her hearing permanently in 1982. In 1984, Bishop John Shoojiroo Ito of Niigata declared the statue tears to be supernatural and approved veneration of Our Lady of Akita. Sr Agnes died aged 93 on 15 August 2024 on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

FINAL WORDS

The Lipa case in the Philippines could have been a forerunner of Vatican taking centralised control on apparition approval. In May 2024, Vatican announced new norms stipulating that the Pope must approve before any bishop announces a supernatural phenomenon. It would be interesting to see if other Asian Marian cases would be re-categorised under the new norms.

Peter Ling is with the Lector Ministry

Vegetable Garden @ St Joseph's Church

Do you know there is a vegetable garden in St Joseph's Church compound located right behind the Rosary Garden?

Two volunteer gardeners look after the vegetable garden: Francis cares for the plants grown from soil while Paul oversees the hydroponic vegetables.

When the gardeners increased the production of vegetables in 2023, our parish decided to offer the vegetables to poor families supported by the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) Conference of St Joachim. The monthly distribution of fresh vegetables to the poor families started in February 2024 after the parish had finalised logistics for harvesting and collection.

The vegetables from the church garden are harvested a couple of days before or on the day of aid distribution on the first Sunday of the month when the Friends-In-Need (FIN) supported by SSVP come to collect their financial aid. The vegetables are packed by SSVP members for FIN to pick up readily. Vegetables include kailan, Hong Kong choy sum, bai cai, basil, sweet potato leaves, Brazil spinach as well as herbs like basil and mint. These fresh vegetables are gladly taken up by the FINs, especially for those who cook for their family daily.

Currently SSVP Conference of St Joachim serves 122 FINs in 50 poor and underprivileged families residing in St Joseph's Church parish, i.e. areas including Bukit Panjang, Choa Chu Kang and Teck Whye.





GLAD Visits the Russian Orthodox Church

In a bid to better appreciate the various religious communities in Singapore, our GLAD (Golden Living Active Disciples) seniors visited the Russian Orthodox Church on Wed 24 July 2024.

Our gracious host, Bishop Pitirim Dodenko, gave us a tour of their Church and addressed all the questions from our curious seniors who were intrigued about their prayers and practices.

The Russian Orthodox Diocese of Singapore was established on 12 October 2007. The Parish Church of the Dormition of the Theotokos was established first at Hillview, then moved in 2014 to the present location at 110 Highland Road. A larger premise is now under construction, and will be on the grounds of a Russian Cultural Centre. The Russian Orthodox community has a following of a few hundred believers.

The visit was an eye-opener for us and helped us to better appreciate other religions in our midst.



July is Bible Month



The Regional Biblical Commission (RBC), under the auspices of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Malaysia-Singapore-Brunei, dedicated the month of July 2024 as "Bible Month".

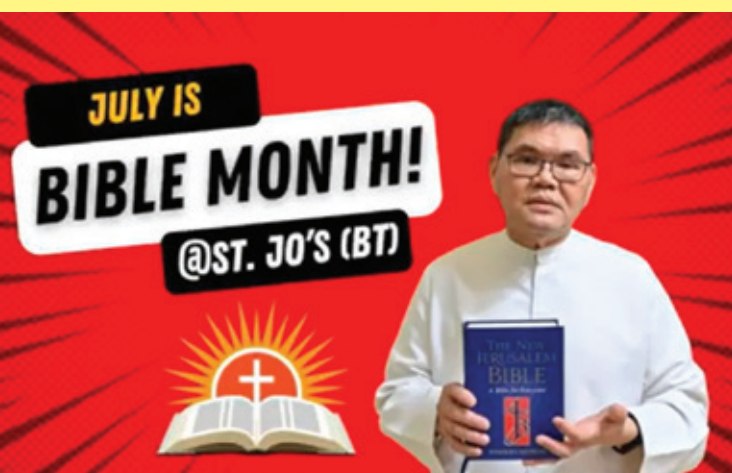
The Parish responded by organising a slew of activities, including a Bible Month promotional video, to commemorate the occasion :

SCRIPTURE SERIES

Fr Ambrose Vaz has been conducting weekly sessions every Thursday to walk through the bible with our seniors. This project was initiated in August 2023 and the group aims to complete reading the entire bible with the guidance of Fr Vaz. All are welcome to join the group.

HOW TO PRAY THE BIBLE

Over two sessions, our parish Pastoral Teams Coordinator, Jane Lau, introduced parishioners to two different methods of praying with the Bible – Lectio Divina and Ignatian Contemplation. Participants were also led into a prayer experience where they tried out these methods while reflecting on Scripture. Feedback from participants was that they found it helpful to have different ways to enter deeper into the Word of God.



ART & FAITH TALK : ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

Patricia Tan uses painting to depict the stories covered in the entire book of the Acts of the Apostles. She couples the art works with spiritual reflections to enrich our experience with God.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

We were privileged to have Fr Ambrose Vaz give an "Introduction to the Bible". He touched on how to go about reading the Bible; on the various types of bibles available as well as how to select one that is suitable for you.

This was held in conjunction with the Bible Fair run by the Daughters of St Paul. The bookshop displayed 23 types of bibles for parishioners to view after the talk.

BIBLE REFLECTION AND SHARING

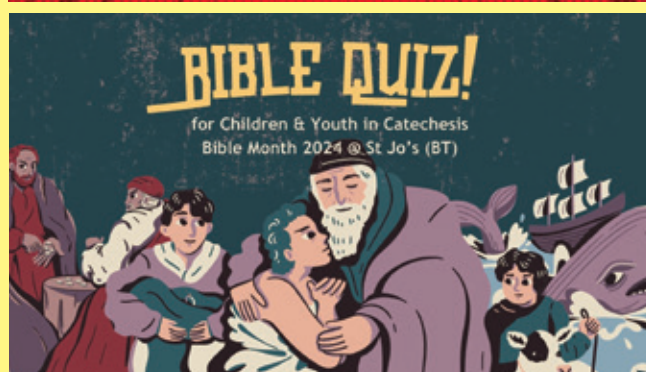
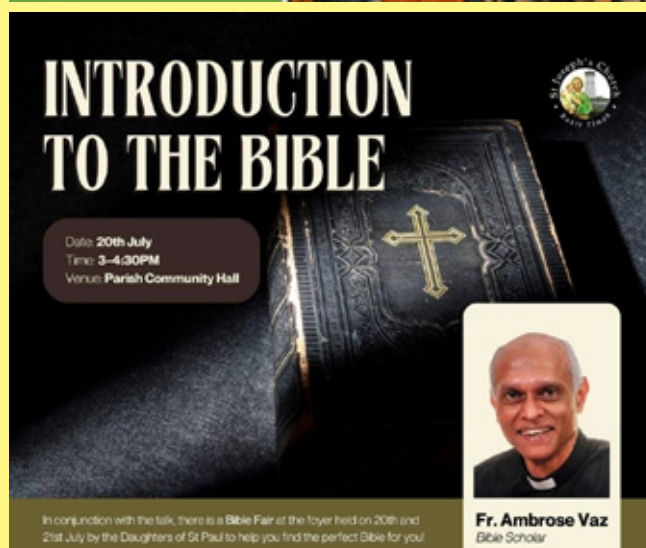
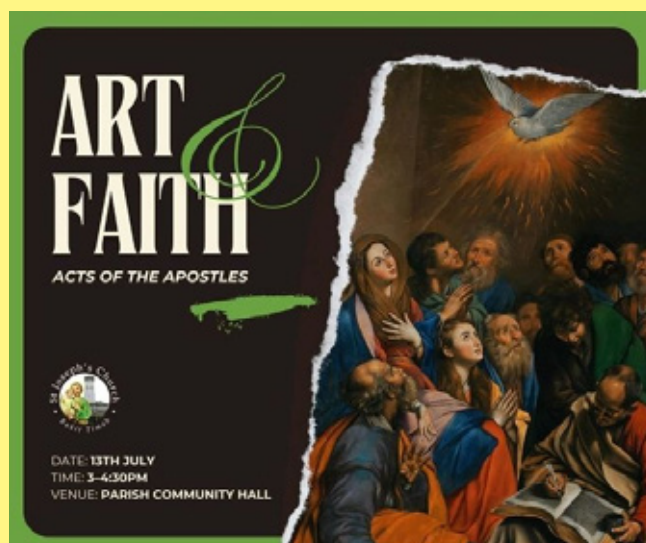
Over the four weekends of July, members of the parish Faith and Bible Reflections Community (FAB) led parishioners in a Breaking of the Word. About 20 parishioners gathered after the 11.30am Mass for a short reflection and sharing on the Sunday Gospel.

BIBLE QUIZ

The Primary and Secondary Catechetical Ministries held Bible Quizzes and an 'Amazing Race' through the Bible to help young people learn more about Scripture. Small prizes were given to those participating to encourage them to explore God's Word further.

Please check out our parish Bible Month Padlet to explore more Bible Month resources and events:

<https://tinyurl.com/2024BibleMonth>





FEAST DAY APPRECIATION DINNER



The Appreciation Dinner was held on Saturday 5 October at the Community Hall. Feast Day Food and Funfair stallholders, as well as ministry members were invited to the dinner which commenced at 7pm.

In his opening address, Parish Priest Fr Christopher Lee thanked everyone involved with the organising of the Feast Day event and concluded that the event was a success by the grace of God and the intercession of our Patron St Joseph.

Chairperson of the Feast Day Organising Committee, Vincent Lee, shared that despite the reduction in number of stallholders post Covid, there are encouraging signs with new stalls managed by parish communities, notably the SJC Filipino Community and the JMJ Tamil Apostolate.

Apart from bonding and fellowship, the dinner hosted by the parish is a token of appreciation to those who had stepped forward to serve the parish community and to ensure continuity of one of our parish's annual tradition – the Feast Day Celebrations.

Neighbourhood Prayer Walks

As a way of fostering community, parishioners gathered to pray for the neighbourhoods served by St Joseph's Church (Bukit Timah).

Once a month from June to November 2024, about 20 parishioners walked around the neighbourhoods of Cashew, Choa Chu Kang, Hillview, Bukit Panjang and Teck Whye, stopping to pray the Rosary along the way for the residents and institutions in the area. Each walk ended with a time of fellowship and reflection on the Word of God.

Our Neighbourhood Prayer Walks will start up again in February 2025 so please put on your walking shoes and join us!

For more information, please join our Whatsapp Community at:
bit.ly/SJCBT-NeighbourhoodPrayerWalk



Chestnut Drive



Hillview



Bukit Panjang





FAMILY FORMATION

In the second half of 2024, the Family Formation team continued to line up a series of events to help families in our parish come closer to God and each other. Apart from organising family-based events, the team also conducted sacramental preparation for parents for infant baptism, first confession and organising intercessory prayers for children during the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) period.



FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

In collaboration with Catholic Family Life (CFL), the team organised the second movie night in July. The evening started off with a nasi lemak dinner and brought together 25 families to go on an adventure with 'The Magician's Elephant' – an animated movie on the power of love and resilience of the human spirit. There was a short sharing session at the end of the movie amongst the parents and children on what they

enjoyed about the movie. The touching anecdotes and happy faces showed that everyone enjoyed the meaningful family time that evening.

PSLE NOVENA PRAYER

During the PLSE preparation period, the Family Formation team organised 9-weekly online Exam Novena on Monday evenings and Saturday mornings between July–September to pray for all the children taking exams to receive God's protection, peace and blessings. Prayers were also offered to St Joseph of Cupertino, the patron saint of exams and students. Between 10–15 families joined the weekly online Novena and six to eight families participated in the prayer vigils during the PSLE days.

POST-PSLE P6 CAMP

A post-PSLE camp was jointly organised with our team of catechists from Primary Catechesis and facilitated by Bro Dominic Yeo-Koh and Mr Zerah Goh from Montfort Centre from 12–14 October. Using the main scripture of finding Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:41–52), the camp helped the P6s at this time of transition to discover the Jesus in them and who Jesus is for them.



Parents joined in the second day of the camp for a family picnic, gained insights on building a domestic church and together with their children took part in a 3D craft activity to build a strong and beautiful church. This day helped the parents to discover the Jesus in each of their child.

The transition from childhood to adolescence is a significant milestone for both child and parent and their relationship with God. On the last day of the camp, the children joined in the World Café on the 10 Principal Virtues of Mary. Each child also took away a little memento on the 10 virtues of Mary to help them increase in these virtues, just as the boy Jesus "increased in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52)

Parents gave positive feedback that the children enjoyed the programme and that it was good family bonding time. So, 2025 P6 parents, do lookout for the camp registration! Camp will be from 11-13 Oct 2025 – mark your calendars!

POSITIVE PARENTING WORKSHOP

The last parenting activity organised jointly with CFL was on positive parenting – 'Beyond I Said So'. This was an experiential workshop to step into the child's world

and understand which discipline methods would work for children. Parents were taught positive discipline tools to be better equipped to handle the daily parenting challenges and importantly to build a relationship with children that is based on mutual respect and connection. Twelve families joined in this workshop.

CALLING ALL DADS!

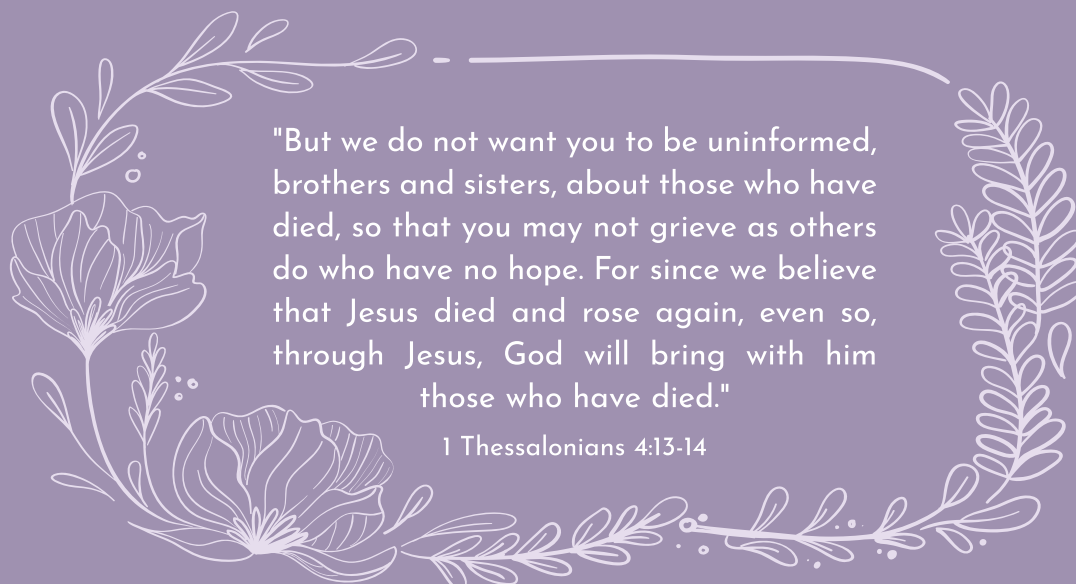
Now you can join a new Dad's group which meets monthly on Saturdays 3.30 - 5pm during school term! For sign-up interest or any enquiries, please contact: sjcbtfamily@gmail.com



Do look out for more family-based activities in 2025 or email to sjcbtfamily@gmail.com for more information.

Please join our Whatsapp Channel to stay updated on Family-related events in and around our parish. Scan the QR Code below using your Whatsapp:





REMEMBERING OUR DEARLY DEPARTED

For Catholics worldwide, the month of November is the time we put aside to remember the dearly departed; and also a time for us to pray for the souls of those in purgatory. A series of events were planned to commemorate this occasion.



DEALING WITH DEPARTURES (SAT 26 OCTOBER)

We were privileged to invite Bro Collin Wee FSC to share on how to prepare for the eventual departure of someone who is terminally ill, and to manage the grief of losing your beloved.

In his usual style, he was entertaining and engaging and yet was able to bring across the message of coming to terms with death and having closure after losing a loved one.

ALL SOULS DAY (SAT 02 NOVEMBER)

Special prayer intention cards were placed in the Cry Room for families to offer up their prayers for their loved ones. These were offered up at both the Masses on All Souls Day.

The priests also blessed the niches at our columbarium and the Catholic Cemetery at the back of our Church. In addition, six priests visited the Catholic Cemeteries and columbarium at Choa Chu Kang to bless the graves and niches there as well.





VISITS TO CATHOLIC COLUMBARIA (WEEKLY, IN NOVEMBER)

During the month of November, visits were organised to various church columbaria to pray for the souls in purgatory. About 30 parishioners visited the Churches of St Francis Xavier, St Francis of Assisi, Holy Spirit, Christ the King, St Anthony and St Ignatius. Prayers were led by members from the Divine Mercy, Legion of Mary and Sodality of St Joseph prayer groups. Participants felt the visits were a very meaningful way to remember our departed brothers and sisters in Christ.



Church of St Francis Xavier Columbarium



Church of Christ the King Columbarium

PREPARING FOR OUR FINAL JOURNEY (SAT 30 NOVEMBER)

The hour of death is a sacred moment because it is a passing from this life to the one promised by the Lord. Parishioners were enlightened on what they need to do to prepare for the eventual journey as we transit from this earthly life to our eternal home in Heaven.

The talk covered topics on preparing ourselves spiritually for death, handling the logistics for a funeral and arranging for a funeral Mass.





追思弥撒 及祈祷会

图/文：进珠

紀念所有忠信離世者

2024年追思会开始前，服务员指导到场的教友写奉献卡，每个人都带着白玫瑰及蜡烛到祭台前献上。晚上7点半，圣母军团员带领教友诵念玫瑰经，同时在投影仪上播放着已故教友的名字。



当晚的弥撒是由张思谦蒙席主礼，约有兩百人出席，大家都怀着对已故亲友的思念，参与追思会。蒙席强调，祭台前的香兰玫瑰是绿色的，象征新生和希望；而白玫瑰则象征怀念和尊敬，让我们共同缅怀祖先和亲友，并期待未来在天堂相聚的日子。

THEIR LIVES CHANGE BUT DO NOT END

In Loving Memory of Our Beloved Departed

1 November 2023 - 31 October 2024

NOVEMBER 2023

† JOACHIM LEE LAI WAY
† PAULINE CHENG POH LING
† CHIA MARY
† ROWENA ANNE LIM SIEW GEK
† FRANCIS RANDOLPH BENSON

DECEMBER 2023

† ROSEMARY KOH YOKE LIN
† JULIANA DA SILVA
† DENNIS OW YEW MUN
† PATSI CATHARINE HENG CHENG CHOO
† PETER KHO MENG SIANG

JANUARY 2024

† ALICE CHEONG WAI LING

FEBRUARY 2024

† ANTOINETTE PATRICK

MARCH 2024

† JUSTIN TAY KIM LEONG
† RAYMOND LUIS WOO WING FOOK
† POLLY CHIAN MENG PENG

APRIL 2024

† OPENA DENNIS DIAZ
† PETER OEI

MAY 2024

† ANTHONY HAN LAI CHOON
† ANDREW TAN
† PETER TAY SOON LEE
† A THOMAS SAMY
† CRISTINA JOSEPH
† CHRISTIAN ANTONIA KAILE ZHAO

JUNE 2024

† HAROLD CHARLES DE ROZARIO
† JULIANA LIM SIEW LING
† JOSEPH ANG KOK HOCK
† ALICE TAN HENG BOON
† ARTHUR LIM BUCK CHYE

JULY 2024

† SYLVIE CHIEW HWEE LENG
† JAYAMARY D/O SALVOM
† LEE JIONG
† LIM BUCK CHYE
† JOACHIM NG BOON ANG
† PETER AW ANG MOH

AUGUST 2024

† MIKE A. CHIA @ CHIA CHENG HOCK
† MICHAEL SAMIKANNU
† ROBERT LAM WAI YENG
† FRANKIE TENG POH SENG

SEPTEMBER 2024

† JOSEPH TENG @ TENG AI LONG
† LUCY POEY POH LUAN

OCTOBER 2024

† STEVEN LAI CHEW SAN
† BENITA ANDREW
† BRIGID MOLLY CHUA
† AGNES CHOO SUN
† KATHLEEN LIM SIEW CHIN
† JOHN VINCENT TAY TECK HWA
† VICTOR TEOW

*"Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon them.
May they rest in peace. Amen."*

ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH
(BUKIT TIMAH)



领完圣体后，我们进入了为炼灵祈祷的环节；那一刻，我的内心充满了感动，尤其是那些生前或死后未得到宽恕的人。但我们的天主慈悲为怀，宽宏大量，祂为教会安排了这一切修和圣事，让所有信靠祂的人不灰心不失望；奇异恩典，何等甘甜，我罪已得赦免，前我失丧，今被寻回，瞎眼今得看见，我虽顽恶，主永不弃...

最后，蒙席呼吁大家为炼灵祈祷，以提醒我们修德行善，时刻妥善准备自己的灵魂；蒙席还邀请大家在炼灵月期间，每天念一串慈悲经，为炼灵祈祷。

结束后，所有事工都聚集在祭台前，为追思活动做感恩祈祷。



2024年收录礼记

慕道者：张兴勇

10月13日是今年慕道班收录礼仪的日子。当我列队站在教堂大门口时，心里有些紧张和期待。当大门缓缓打开时，一踏进教堂，我顿时被眼前的景象震惊到了。教堂里座无虚席，鸦雀无声，一看到在祭台后面的主耶稣画像，我立刻感到了一种敬畏和尊重，紧张的心情也随之安复下来，感觉教堂是一个和外面世界不一样的地方，是一个能让我感受到内心的平安和喜乐的地方。

收录礼开始了，慕道班的学员一字排开站在祭台前，后面站着我们的陪同员。从回答“信”到“永生”，再到“我们愿意”跟基督走这信仰的旅程，再到接受主基督的十字圣号和充满福音的圣经，整个仪式庄重而热烈。对一个刚刚踏上信仰之路的我来说，这是一种心灵的呼唤，唤醒我重新思考信仰主耶稣基督的力量。今天的一小步，就是改变人生信仰的一大步。

能有幸参加收录礼，还要感谢慕道班孜孜不倦的服务人员和陪同员们。他们精心安排每周的课程，组织得井井有条，就象一个温暖的基督大家庭。正如张蒙席在收录礼上所说的，从今往后，我从一名问道者转变为慕道者。信仰天主的旅程已经开启。美好的开端给了我信心和动力，让我对新生活充满期待。





陪同员: Grace戴月红

圣期待已久的一日朝圣终于到来了。张蒙席介绍说,朝圣是要体会天主在这个旅程中的显现。

我们乘坐一辆中巴,一路上唱着赞美歌声中到了隐修院。在这个繁华嘈杂的城市里,居然有如此静谧的地方,这里的修女一心一生侍奉天主,过着清贫的生活,修炼着内心的自由!

参观了大巴窑的博爱村,照顾老弱病残、不分种族国籍的大爱和人文关怀,在这个强者为王的现实社会里实属难得。

市中心的第一座天主教堂,跟着导览了解近200年的历史,建筑风格,历届神父的人格魅力和贡献。

周四晚上,我得知周六晚上11pm-6am,在灵修中心有一个守夜活动。耶稣要求宗徒们在祂受难前夕陪伴祂祈祷一小时,我也想到了陪伴。在活动中,我们一起唱赞美歌,我也匍匐在主脚前,心中充满了

对陪伴祈祷的感激之情。在夜深人静时,我静静感受着心灵神交,爱的表达。

在星期天7:30am弥撒中,慕道班举行了收录礼。看着慕道者们被用香油划十字圣号,领取圣经,我为他们感到高兴,并祈求天主眷顾他们,使他们走上更接近天主的信仰之路。

生活中有很多挑战,但我庆幸有圣若瑟教堂,感谢神父的启发解惑和教友们温暖的友谊。祈求圣神的带领,让我们体会并活出天主的爱。阿们。





心灵自由，无远弗届

(访加尔默罗隐修院感想)

刘培芳

那天早上，阳光明媚，我和大伙儿怀着虔敬的心情，跟随着张思谦蒙席，慢步登上武吉德莉莎路的小山丘。

我以前从未听说过加尔默罗隐修院，虽然从谷歌上知道了它的缘起和意涵，我依然带着探索与好奇心，一步一步攀上台阶，走入了这个既宁静美丽而又神奇奥秘的世界。

凡尘俗世中的我们很难理解终其一生与世隔绝的滋味。穿过清幽小庭园，在安静的小教堂里，聆听Jacinta修女讲述，然后再到小舍里，隔着栅栏聆听Anna修女分享隐修生活。

修女们身着整洁的棕色长袍，精神抖擞，活泼开朗，又从容淡定。在爱的感召与信仰的坚持下，她们献出一生，全心全意事奉天主。她们生活简朴，安分守己，怡

然自得，静修隐居；祈祷、默想、学习、工作，日复一日，无怨无悔地为人民的福祉、世界的和平与美好而努力。

她们不觉得自己牺牲了什么，反而感到无比的幸福和快乐，因为她们坚信祈祷的力量，她们心安、执着、喜悦且自在。

“当你与世隔绝时，你不觉得失去了自由吗？”有人难免会问。“不，心灵的自由才是真正的自由！内心自由最重要，远比身体和形式的自由更重要。”她们都这么说。

游览结束时，寂静的山上下起了雨。当我撑着伞走下山时，我的心就像被雨淋过一样清澈、宁静。是的，心灵的自由是无远弗届的。我们这些被“关”在外面世界里的凡人，并不比隐身修院中的修女们自由！

一日朝圣之感

THE GOOD SHEPHERD
LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE
FOR HIS SHEEP

慕道者：栾俊

2004年11月12日，我怀着无比激动的心情，与教堂的弟兄姐妹们一起踏上了一日朝圣之旅。虽然这是我第二次参加朝圣活动，但心情依然难以平静！一路上，我们集体诵读玫瑰经，很快就到了第一个参观地：加尔默罗隐修院。在耶稣降生后，先知的徒弟们都迁往欧洲等地，成立加尔默罗隐修院。以祈祷、隐修和劳动作为基础，传播福音。看着修女们放弃自由追随天主，为世人祈祷赦罪，我的敬佩之情油然而生！

善牧主教座堂是新加坡第一间罗马天主教堂。进到教堂，映入眼帘的是壮丽恢宏的大祭台和金碧辉煌的圣殿。

通过这次的朝圣，我真切地感受到天主是无所不在的，我们的教会是大公的，教友们所表现出的是教友是一家人。因此，我深受鼓舞，决心好好学习圣经，尽快加入教会。我们带着满满的恩宠离开圣堂，离

开了大圣若瑟的怀抱。虽然我们离开了圣人的朝圣地，但他的精神却一直鞭策着我们努力学习，他在天堂也一直为我们向天主祈祷。

朝圣不是终点，而是新的起点，是信仰的新起点和加油站。

大圣若瑟，请为我们转求！



我心深处 有感而发

慕道者：亿睿善

我来自中国上海。我的原生家庭是一个典型的高干家庭，父母都是受过高等教育的专业人士，从小接受的教育是与《圣经》完全不一样的达尔文的《进化论》。

今年6月的一天，孩子的英文辅导老师给了我一张教会的传单，问我要不要去参加“慕道班”。也许是出于盛情难却，也许是出于不忍拒绝，也许是出于对老师的信任，我答应了，心想去听听也无妨，但其实当时的我根本不清楚什么是慕道班。

通过每周一次的慕道课程，我慢慢开始了解教会，了解耶稣基督和《圣经》。在这期间，张蒙席、慕道班的服务人员和孩子的辅导老师给了我很多帮助，解答了我很多疑问。

上星期六(2024.10.12)，我参加了慕道班的活动：本地朝圣一日游，从张蒙席和导览人员的讲解中，我了解了本地教会和隐修院的历史等等。

上星期天(2024.10.13)，我第一次参加了主日弥撒，并在庄严神圣的收录礼上，从张蒙席手中接过了《圣经》。虽然还有很多疑问和不完全的理解，但是这对于我来说是一个小小里程碑，我终于迈出了第一步。

说来，我与武吉知马圣若瑟堂有不解之缘。因为我的孩子10多年前就在武吉知马圣若瑟幼儿园就读，直至他从K2毕业；我在家里就能听到教堂庄严宏亮的钟声，既然离教堂这么近，何不继续学习和深入了解呢？





A ONE-DAY LOCAL PILGRIMAGE WITH CATECHUMENS

MARIA 陈清云

CARMELITE MONASTERY

The sky was overcast on the Saturday morning when I arrived at the Carmelite monastery. I was there to join the St Joseph's Church Chinese RCIA group on a one-day local pilgrimage. Coincidentally, the coach carrying 31 other participants arrived at the same time. Monsignor Peter Zhang, together with the catechumens and sponsors alighted and we began our first stop.

We ascended a flight of stairs and entered into the tranquil sanctuary of the Carmelite sisters. Sr Linda received us and led us into the chapel where we were briefed by Sr Jacinta. We were then led to a small hall where Sr Anna, separated from us by a panel of bars, very patiently and cheerfully answered all our questions. Why would anyone in their right mind consent to live behind walls for the rest of their life? How many Carmelite sisters are there? How do they spend their time? Could they ever step out from the cloister?

For a moment, the veil was lifted. We learned that there are twenty sisters living in the monastery, the youngest is 30 years old and the oldest is 98 years old. They live a simple communal life cloistered from the outside world. Other than

going for medical appointment, they do not step out of the monastery. Their days are steeped in prayers, contemplation, silence and work.

AGAPE VILLAGE

It was raining cats and dogs when we descended the monastery to board the coach to our next destination. Enroute, we recited the Rosary and belted out hymns in high spirits. Before long, we reached Agape Village located in Toa Payoh. We were greeted by two Caritas staff Susan and Gail who gave us a briefing on Caritas, their mission and work.

After a sumptuous bento lunch, we proceeded to tour the premises. We were shown the facilities run by various charity organisations under Caritas. There is even a dental clinic! They reach out to all the needy regardless of race and religion. Their areas of work include childcare, student care, counselling, physiotherapy, the handicapped, elderly and home-bound. It was indeed an eye-opening experience for me to see the scope of charity work covered.

CATHEDRAL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Our final destination is the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd, the first Catholic Church built in Singapore. Our arrival there coincided with a wedding taking place in the cathedral. Unperturbed, we broke into two groups and followed our respective guides, Tracey and Keith, to tour the Cathedral's Museum. There we feasted our eyes on the artefacts, liturgical articles and pictures exhibited.

We learned that the cathedral was named Good Shepherd to commemorate Bishop Imbert who, together with two fellow priests, were martyred in Korea in 1839. We also learned about the missionary priests who left their homeland to spread the gospel to Asia, including Singapore; as well as the missionaries who built churches and schools in Singapore.

As soon as the wedding was over, we were given the green light to enter and tour the cathedral. As we entered the cathedral, I was drawn to the pieta sculpture by Michaelangelo. Who can stand unmoved before the sorrowful mother holding her dead son in her arms - beyond grief, beyond blame, knowing that her son has to lay down his life for our salvation.

Contemplating the pieta, images of the Carmelite sisters flashed through my mind. They have left everything and laid down their lives. Likewise, all missionaries, priests and religious, past and present, have left everything and laid down their lives.

As Christians, we too are called to deny ourselves and lay down our lives. It is heartening to know that many of our brothers and sisters are doing so at Caritas.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

PREPARATIONS FOR OUR 180TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2026



In one and a half years' time, we will have reached another milestone in the history of our Church. The theme for our 180th Anniversary is "St Joseph: Model of All Who Work".

We thank the Lord for His many blessings that enabled our parish to grow and flourish. We are ever grateful for the grounds that we have been endowed with and for the dedication and commitment of our parishioners (both past and present) who have played a great role in growing the community and developing the grounds.

To better appreciate our rich history, we will be publishing a series of 18 articles which will be released on every first Sunday of the month (commencing Dec 2024) in our Church bulletin to share with the community the various aspects of our Church and the people who have contributed to its growth. The articles show how we have evolved from a wooden chapel established by French missionaries in Kranji in 1846 to our present Church today. We give recognition to all those who have contributed to the growth of our Church to bring us to where we are today.

Look out also for the exciting programmes that we will be lining up for you from May 2025.