



June
Edition

木 THE 匠 CARPENTER

35th Edition, June 2026



1846 - 2026

A JOYOUS

Thanksgiving

FOR 180 YEARS WITH ST JOSEPH



木 THE 匠 CARPENTER

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FOREWORD

As we commemorate the 180th Anniversary of the Church of St Joseph, we give thanks to Almighty God for His abiding providence and grace bestowed upon this parish community throughout the generations. This significant milestone is not merely a celebration of history, but a profound moment of thanksgiving, reflection, and spiritual renewal.

From its humble beginnings, the Church of St Joseph has grown steadily under the patronage and protection of St Joseph, becoming a vibrant and evangelising community of faith. Through the dedication, sacrifices, and fidelity of countless parishioners, clergy, and religious, this parish has remained a beacon of hope and a witness to the Gospel in Singapore. Its transformation over the years reflects not only physical and pastoral growth, but more importantly, the living faith of the People of God guided continually by the Holy Spirit.

In a special way, we are deeply grateful for the granting of the Plenary Decree of Indulgence during this Jubilee celebration. This sacred gift of the Church invites the faithful to experience more profoundly the mercy, healing, and grace of God. It reminds us that this anniversary is not solely an occasion to honour the past, but an invitation to spiritual conversion and renewed communion with Christ and His Church.

The Decree of Indulgence further calls us to deepen our prayer, strengthen our charity, and renew our commitment to the mission of evangelisation entrusted to us. As pilgrims of hope, we are encouraged to draw inspiration from the example of St Joseph, whose quiet fidelity, humility, and unwavering trust in God continue to guide the Church in every age.

As we celebrate this historic occasion, may we look to the future with renewed zeal and confidence. May the Church of St Joseph continue to flourish as a welcoming home of faith, a community united in love and service, and a shining witness to the Gospel for generations to come.

Entrusting this parish to the loving care of St Joseph, we pray that he may continue to intercede for us and lead us always closer to Christ.

Fr Christopher Lee
Parish Priest



LAUNCH OF THE 180TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

PLENARY INDULGENCE

On the occasion of the 180th Anniversary of St Joseph's Church (Bukit Timah), our Holy Father, Pope Leo XIV, has granted a plenary indulgence valid until the end of the year. The faithful are invited to come and pray before the statue of St Joseph and follow the prescribed conditions indicated below.

Prescribed General Conditions for receiving Plenary Indulgence

The faithful are asked to

- have complete detachment from sin;
- receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- receive the Holy Eucharist; and
- pray for the intentions of the Holy Father

and to perform one of these aspects after visiting the statue of St Joseph

1. attend Mass;
2. perform one Corporal Work of Mercy; or
3. perform one Spiritual Work of Mercy

EVELYN LAU

Plenary Indulgence

With praise and thanksgiving to God, we have formally launched our 180th Anniversary Celebrations with the introduction of the Plenary Indulgence on Thursday 19 March, Solemnity of St Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

At the 7 pm Mass in the Main Church, Msgr Peter Zhang elaborated on what a

Plenary Indulgence is and the prescribed conditions that need to be fulfilled to gain the indulgence.

To gain the plenary indulgence, the faithful are welcome to:

- visit St Joseph's Church between 19 March - 31 December 2026;
- pray at the statue of St Joseph at the Church foyer; and
- fulfil the prescribed conditions (listed next to the statue)

Memorial Plaque

It was also a timely occasion to remember our founding priest, Fr Anatole Mauduit. A Memorial Plaque has been installed which contains (on the left) a transcription (or a copy) of the original gravestone of Fr Anatole which is written in Latin and Chinese; as well as (on the right) a translation in English.



Reading the Gravestone

D. O. M.
 ANATOLIUS MAUDUIT,
 E Congreg Missionum ad Exteros
 Qui Primus
 hanc Christianit et Ecclesiam S Joseph
 fundavit Erexit ac gubernavit,
 Vir zelo ac pietate conspicuus.
 In corporis afflictationibus fortitudine
 insignis.
 Pro fide propagandā
 impensā curā impensā substantiā
 superimpensus ipse
 Omnium votis et amori ereptus obiit die 1
 Aprilis,
 Anno Ω S, MDCCCLVIII.
 ætatis suae XLI.
 hoc mærentes posuerunt oves
 Monumentum pietatis in Bonum Pastorem

生於耶曆一千八百一十六年五月
 傳教誨人於大山母十二年
 聖名亞納多肋孟神父之靈墓
 終於耶曆一千八百五十八年二月十八日

Transcription of the gravestone

To God, best and greatest,
 ANATOLE MAUDUIT
 from the Paris Foreign Missions Society,
 who first
 founded, built, and governed
 St Joseph's Church.
 A man of visible zeal and piety,
 he was marked by fortitude in corporal
 affliction.
 For the propagation of the faith,
 having expended care and substance
 he himself was spent.
 From the prayers of all and drawn away to
 Love,
 he died on the first of April 1858,
 at 41 years of age.
 His mourning sheep set down this monument
 in devotion to the Good Shepherd.

This is the tomb of Fr. Anatolius Mauduit.
 He was born in the fifth month of 1816.
 After being a missionary for 12 years
 on this mountain,
 he returned to the Lord on the 18th day
 of the second month in 1858.

Translation of the gravestone



Bell Tower

Finally, we had the privilege of ringing our new Church bells for the first time for a Mass.

The horizontal bell tower contains seven bells named after saints.

We gather today to dedicate our new bell tower, a symbol of our parish's enduring tradition of worship and community. The original bells, which have long called our faithful to Mass and marked life's milestones, are being replaced with a

new set that will continue this cherished legacy.

Programmed to ring out the familiar melody that has echoed through our streets for generations, these bells will once again summon us to prayer, celebration, and the Eucharist. May their melodious sound remind us of our shared heritage and the joy of gathering in faith.

What an evening it was to behold. All praise and glory to God.

St Joseph, Pray for us.





PETRINA WONG

On 9 May 2026, a few dozen youths (including me) gave up our Saturday leisure time to attend a Youth Retreat conducted by Fr Augustine Vallooran and two members of his retreat team — Glen and Teresa. The retreat comprised a series of talks given by Fr Augustine, Glen and Teresa, respectively, followed by Praise and Singing, and ending with Eucharistic Adoration and the Mass.

The talks shed light on the hows and whys of living the Christian life, animated by personal stories and justifications for our faith. First, a reminder from Fr Augustine is to live with the living word, not to just read it as a storybook. Second, Glen illustrated the choice between living as natural, spiritual, or carnal humans. Third, Teresa explained how we can know God through reason.

Music, Media and Spirituality

One thing that stood out to me from the talks was what Glen said about how the

kind of music we listen to influences us. It affirmed my suspicion that there is indeed something wrong with the level of unwariness we, particularly the young, have towards the media we consume.

If God is to be the centre of our lives, how can we still keep a clean conscience while we rest one foot in knowledge of good and dangle the other foot over knowledge of evil? In my heart, I know I want to change for good, but it's terribly tempting to simply take this information as just another piece of advice or as a suggestion but not a rule.

Nourishing our Spirit

As always, the call to prayer appears as the apparent solution to this dilemma. I suppose that after knowing comes praying. If a weakness is known, action had better be taken towards remedy before it festers into complacency or addiction. Therefore, let's not see prayer as just another chore on the list of things to do in a day, but as a much needed medicine or as food for a starving soul.

CELEBRATING 180 YEARS WITH ST JOSEPH

Our parish family joyfully marked its 180th Anniversary, a milestone that reflects years of faith, community, and mission. The celebration was a heartfelt occasion filled with thanksgiving and prayer, bringing together generations of parishioners to honour our Patron Saint.

May 1 Feast Day Mass and Procession

The 5.30 pm Mass was celebrated by Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, Julian Leow. Following the Mass, his Grace led us into a procession. The solemn procession of St Joseph's statue around the church compound was accompanied by prayers and hymns. Members from the Ministries, Prayer Groups, Service Teams, and Communities (MPSC) participated in the procession, each group proudly bearing their banners.

May 2 Saturday Masses

Archbishop Emeritus John Ha of Kuching returned this year and graced the congregation with his presence by celebrating the 5.30 pm Sunset Mass.

A Tamil Mass was celebrated at 7.30 pm for our Tamil community. The evening concluded with dinner for the attendees, where laughter and fellowship carried the spirit of celebration into the night.





May 3 Mass, Food and Funfair

The Sunday 11.30 am Mass was celebrated by Cardinal William Goh. Following the Mass, his Eminence proceeded to bless the newly launched Bell Tower.

Cardinal Goh took the opportunity to visit the Food and Funfair, stopping by various stalls. His warm and approachable nature shone through as he engaged in friendly chats with the stallholders. His presence brought a sense of joy and inclusivity, making the event even more memorable for all who attended.

May 5, 6, 7 Triduum Masses

Each evening began with Praise & Worship, Eucharistic Adoration, followed by Mass. Facilitated by Fr Augustine Vallooran, Director of Divine Retreat Centre, Kerala, a prolific evangelist who dedicates his life to spreading Christian love and spiritual renewal by leading retreats and missions worldwide, the theme for the Triduum was “Gathered in Faith, Living in Love”.

Fr Augustine reminded us of the enduring faithfulness of God, exemplified through the life of St Joseph. His preaching consistently highlighted how St Joseph’s unwavering obedience, trust and loyalty serve as an inspirational model for believers today.

Through this three-day spiritual journey, the parish community emerged with a deeper understanding of our faith and a stronger commitment to live out the mission to nourish faith in a loving community.





May 10 Thanksgiving Mass and Dinner

Our parish was honoured to welcome his Excellency Archbishop Marek Zalewski, the Apostolic Nuncio to Singapore, to celebrate the 5 pm Thanksgiving Mass.



It was truly a blessed evening as his Excellency joined parishioners who gathered at the Orchid Country Club for the 180th Anniversary Dinner, where he gave the mothers present a special Mother's Day blessing.

A Huge Thank You

We thank all the visiting priests and religious who have given of their time to grace our celebrations, and we are richly blessed by their prayers and blessings.



The recent celebration was a resounding success, and this achievement can be attributed to the enthusiastic involvement of the organising committee, parishioners and volunteers. Their dedication and commitment were the cornerstone of this celebration, ensuring that every aspect of the events ran smoothly and joyously.



Let us pray to God asking that St Joseph, a just and faithful worker, be a model and guide to all of us.



180th ANNIVERSARY THANKSGIVING DINNER







Treading in the Footsteps of St Francis of Assisi

Mount Verna with the Sanctuary *Image: laverna.it*

JANE LAU

Like many Catholics, in the year of the Pilgrims of Hope (2025), parishioners in St Joseph's Church (Bukit Timah) know it is a good time to go on a pilgrimage. Some of us, however, decided to do it differently. In June 2025, twenty-seven of us, old and young, walked and hiked in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi, the way that he had walked from Assisi to Rome to obtain Papal approval from Pope Innocent III for the Franciscan Order.

The pilgrims were led by hiking guides from the United States, and our Spiritual Director was Assistant Parish Priest, Fr Lourdusamy Prasanna. Setting off from Singapore in different groups and transiting through different points, we first gathered in Rome at the airport in the morning.

From there, we set off by bus through a series of highways and tunnels to our first stop, Florence, where we spent the first

two nights in hotels while exploring its rich history (especially the extra virgin olive oil and how the Friars came into the city).

After that, the pilgrims set off for the first major destination, Santuario della Verna (the Sanctuary of La Verna), high up on Mount Penna and away from the hustle and bustle. The hikers started the first hike there. For those who were unable to hike, even the grounds of the Sanctuary of La Verna itself was more than enough to cover as it is rich with history surrounding St Francis and the Friars, including that of Blessed John of La Verna, whose body lies in the Basilica. The highlight of our stay there was the Chapel of the Stigmata of St Francis. We stayed a few nights in the Sanctuary of La Verna, where the environment was great for contemplation and prayer. The nights were cold even though it was summer!

After La Verna, the hikers continued to San Sepolcoro with a beautiful view of a waterfall, before re-joining the non-hikers

at the next accommodation, Citta di Castello. This town serves as the main gateway for the remaining of the journey to the main star attraction, Assisi.

After a night in Citta di Castello, the hikers continued their hike to Pietralunga, while the non-hikers were bussed to the next major destination, Gubbio, the town where St Francis had tamed a ferocious wolf which was terrorising the town's people.

From Gubbio, the hikers then went for one final hike into Assisi. It was the most treacherous route, with steep climbs and slopes, narrow paths, pinecones and all. But it was worth it when the hikers finally arrived at Assisi through the back and rang the Pilgrim's Bell. The non-hikers came down from the hill of Assisi to greet the hikers. The pilgrims stayed in Assisi

for five days, soaking in everything it has to offer, from the Basilicas of St Francis and St Clare, to visiting the tomb of the recently-canonised St Carlo Acutis in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Finally, the pilgrims made one final trip to Rome itself. The highlight of the visit was the Vatican, and the opportunity to attend the Papal Audience to see the face of Pope Leo XIV in person. To complete the pilgrimage, the pilgrims went through the Holy Doors in all ways we could, some even kneeling through them.

All in all, it was a very spiritually-rich trip for all the pilgrims. For at the heart of our trip was our yearning for God. We completed the pilgrimage, spiritually enriched, and returned to Singapore, by the grace of God. For this, we thank Him for ever and ever.

Amen!



Catechists Retreat

DIANA HO

Since 2019, the catechists from the three catechetical ministries (CGS, Primary and Secondary catechesis) from our parish had been gathering annually as a community prior to commencement of each catechetical year. In January 2026, we had the privilege of having Sr Kriz Lam, RC as our retreat mistress.

Called First to Encounter with Christ

This year's theme was Called First to Encounter with Christ. The set up was quite different from the past years. All the retreatants sat in a circle facing the prayer table with a sleeping Jesus on the table top.



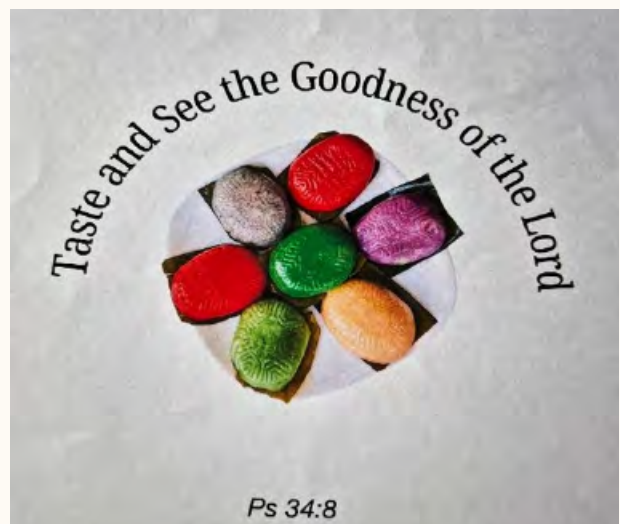
This allowed the retreatants to focus on responding to Jesus' invitation to spend time with him in prayer and in silence.

Taste and See

At tea break, we were invited to '*taste and see the goodness of the Lord*'. We each queued in anticipation to choose a piece of delightful ang ku kueh in silence. We were invited to use all our senses gifted to us to encounter God through this snack.

... the colour ... why did this colour appeal to me? ...

... the touch ... the stickiness of the texture ... the oiliness, the creases, the folds ... was it uncomfortable? ...



... the smell ... can I guess the filling within through the smell? ...

... the taste ... did I guess the flavour? ...

... I take my time to bite, to chew, to swallow ... the goodness of the Lord ...

Do I taste the different ingredients that made the kueh? ...

It is good ... It is good ... It is good ... (Genesis 1)

We ended the exercise with gratitude for the gifts of the senses we have received, which are more of a privilege than an entitlement. We are all special and unique in the eyes of God.

Commissioning of Catechists

The retreat culminated in the annual Commissioning Mass where all Catechists, Assistants and Facilitators take the commitment to be faithful stewards of God's gifts and humbly request for prayers to serve our children in St Joseph's Church through teaching the Truth which comes from God by word and by examples. As it was also Catechetical Sunday, blessings were also bestowed by the Celebrant on parents as parents were reminded that as first Catechists to the children, they play a critical role in forming their children in faith.





Pongal

HENNY NATHAN

We started the year 2026 with the theme:
**A Harvest of Thanksgiving,
 One Family, One Faith.**

This year’s Pongal celebration was a vibrant testimony to our unity as “Tamil Apostles.” Coming together as one family to prepare for this Thanksgiving Day, we felt the true meaning of being a community of faith.

Offering our First Fruits

Pongal is our time to offer the “first fruits” of our lives back to the Creator. In the spirit of Psalm 107:1, “*Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever,*” we celebrated the many blessings showered upon our families.

The sight of the milk boiling over — symbolising overflowing prosperity — was a reminder of God’s constant grace in our lives. The preparation brought us closer, bridging generations and traditions. As we shared games, laughter, and fellowship, we were reminded that our cultural heritage and our Catholic faith are beautifully entwined. We stand united, moving forward into 2026 with hearts full of praise for the harvest of love God has given us.





YOUTH FAIR

LEONARD ONG

It is often said that the youths are the future of the Church. Yet this invites a deeper question: how can we help our young people discover their place within the life of the Church today?

In March, our parish held its annual Ministry Fair for our L7 to L10 candidates.

Held at the parish community hall, the fair opened the doors for our youths to explore the many ways they can serve the Lord and continue building up the Church. Various youth communities and parish ministries set up booths to share about their missions and the different ways young people can participate in parish life.

The Ministry Experience

More than just simply hearing about the ministries, the young people were invited to experience them. Each booth prepared interactive activities that allowed the youths to engage, ask questions, and gain a glimpse into the life of the different communities and ministries. From service-oriented ministries to faith communities

focused on prayer, fellowship, and formation, the fair showed the many opportunities available for young people to grow in faith and friendship.

The fair also invited young people to follow-up programmes and gatherings organised by these communities. These moments serve as important bridges, helping youths take the next step from curiosity to deeper involvement in parish life.

Help Build the Kingdom of God

As St Catherine of Siena once said, "*Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.*" Events like the Ministry Fair remind us that nurturing faith in the young requires invitation, accompaniment, and opportunities to belong. And again, if the youths truly are the future of the Church, let us then provide them a space to grow in zeal and faith, to discover their place within the Church, a place that allows them to be who they are called to be; using their gifts to build His Kingdom here on earth.

For more information on our youth communities, please email sjcbt.cntyreach@catholic.org.sg

Tenebrae

Service of Shadows



NICK WAN

**Tenebrae:
An Ode to the Darkness and
Light of the Cross**

Good Friday is the day on which Jesus our Lord sacrificed Himself for us. Many of us attend the Good Friday service, entering into the solemn remembrance of His Passion. Yet, for some of the youths and parishioners of St Joseph's (Bukit Timah), this year's commemoration unfolded in a deeper and more contemplative way.

Organised by members of the parish's youth groups, together with a dedicated youth choir, and presided over by Msgr Peter Zhang, the Tenebrae: Service of Shadows returned for its third year. Once again, it stood as a quiet yet powerful invitation

to journey in spirit with our Lord to Mount Calvary — not merely as observers, but as participants in His suffering and love.

Meditating on Christ's Passion

This year's service centred on the Seven Last Words of Jesus — the final words He spoke during His Crucifixion and death on the Cross. Through these words, the congregation was drawn into a space of reflection and prayer. Msgr Peter guided the assembly through moments of prayer and reflection, while the youths of the parish proclaimed Scripture readings and offered reflections that were both heartfelt and searching. Between these moments, the choir — now grown into a 25-member ensemble — lifted voices in hymns that deepened the stillness and gravity of the occasion.

With each completed reflection, a pair of candles on the prayer table was extinguished by the altar servers. Gradually, the hall dimmed as lights were turned off in tandem with the fading flames. This slow descent into darkness seemed to echo the growing weight of sorrow and abandonment that marked Christ's final hours, inviting the congregation to sit with that heaviness rather than turn away from it.

At last, after the seventh Scripture reading and reflection, silence fell. The choir no longer sang, the hall lay in near-total darkness, and the final pair of candles was extinguished — all except for the single, taller Jesus Candle standing at the centre. Its solitary flame flickered gently, holding in tension both loss and hope.

The Strepitus

Then came the defining moment: the Strepitus — the earthquake. The choir stamped their feet, and in that sudden, jarring sound, the Jesus Candle was hidden from view. Christ had died. The darkness felt complete. And yet, even in that moment, a faint light filtered through the glass doors and windows. It was subtle, almost easily overlooked, yet deeply symbolic—as if to remind all present that even in the darkest hour, Christ's light is never fully extinguished.

The Light Restored

After a brief stillness, the Jesus Candle was returned to the prayer table. No words were spoken. The congregation was invited to leave the hall in silence, carrying with them what they had witnessed and

felt. The service had ended, but the encounter lingered.

Even as chairs were stacked and the hall was quietly cleared, Christ's presence seemed to remain — gentle, unseen, yet unmistakable. It is a presence that endures through the solemn waiting of the Easter Triduum, leading toward the dawn of the Resurrection, when a new Paschal Candle is blessed and lit. From that single flame, the Light of Christ spreads once more, rekindling hope in hearts that have kept vigil in the darkness.



Children's Eucharistic Adoration



Led by
FR LIONEL THOMAS

JEREMY LEE

As part of Catechetical sessions for Primary Level, Eucharistic Adoration was held for the children on 18 April, to allow them to deepen their understanding and love for the Eucharist, which is the source and summit of our Catholic faith. As part of the session, St Joseph's Church has specially invited Fr Lionel Thomas from Malacca to share with the children his passion and ardent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

Living a Life of Faith and Devotion

The session was truly a blessed time with the Lord! Fr Lionel shared with the children his own devotion to the Eucharist and how important it is for us to show reverence to the Sacrament as Jesus is truly present there. The devotion to the Eucharist is inseparable from a constant life of prayer and active participation in the Mass, and Fr Lionel encouraged the children to live

these practices out with their families so that our families as a domestic church can all grow closer in communion with the Lord.

Blessing and Anointing

During the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, the Catechists were invited to the front of the altar to receive a blessing and anointing from Fr Lionel, that the Lord may continue to uphold them in faith and love and bless them with the graces needed to carry out the Lord's work in this ministry. The children, with their parents, were also similarly invited to the altar to receive an anointing, that the Lord may bless them and keep them always, and that the children may grow in faith and trusting love for Jesus.

Reverence for the Most Blessed Sacrament

Through this session, I was inspired by Fr Lionel's love and zeal for the Eucharist. It is not just mere bread and wine or a

symbol, but the real presence of Christ our Lord and Saviour. Sometimes I feel that I take that for granted or I diminish the significance of it, but the Eucharistic adoration reminded me of how blessed we are that we have a God who so yearns to be close to us, that He chooses to be present to us in this way. Therefore, we should always treat the Eucharist with reverence and respect.

It was also a touching moment for me to see the children pray and also receive a blessing in front of the Lord's presence during the Eucharistic Adoration. Praise God that we get to adore and receive Him into our hearts in such a tangible way! I pray that through this session, everyone present will have gained a deeper appreciation and reverence for the Eucharist and the vastness of God's love for us, and that we may incorporate the practices of prayer and Eucharistic adoration more into our daily lives to truly encounter the risen Lord every day.



JMJ

Feast of Miracles at the St Joseph Food Stall

HENNY NATHAN

Our theme for our food stall at the St Joseph Feast Day was “**Service with Joyful Hearts**”.

The St Joseph Feast Day is always a highlight for our parish, but 2026 felt truly special. Our JMJ Tamil Community had the great blessing of organising a food stall, and the experience was nothing short of a “*Miracle of the loaves and fishes.*”

As we volunteered to set up and serve, we were reminded of 1 Peter 4:10: “*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace.*”

Whether it was prepping ingredients or serving our St Joseph family with a smile, the joy was contagious. We witnessed a beautiful outpouring of gratitude. People didn’t just come to eat; they donated prosperously, showing their deep love for St Joseph. This generosity allowed us to serve our family members with happiness, proving that when we work for the Lord, He provides in abundance.

We are so grateful to every volunteer who gave their time and to every parishioner who supported us.



MEMORIES OF OUR PRIESTS

PETER LING

I am honoured to write something about our three priests who would be leaving our parish on 22 July 2026 for new assignments in other locations of the Archdiocese of Singapore.

Since many parishioners know about the numerous contributions of our three priests from parish Facebook and bulletins, The Carpenter newsletter and weekly interactions, I decided to salute Msgr Peter Zhang, Fr Lourdusamy Prasanna and Fr Christopher Lee through recalling my personal interactions and encounters with them.

Msgr Peter Zhang (ordained 2003)

I am starting with Msgr Peter because my wife Alicia and I first met him in late 2018 when we wanted to join the Lector Ministry. As the Spiritual Director, he wanted to know more about our experience as lectors in Australia. In turn, we learned more about him: he was from the Religious Order of the Congregation of the Disciples of the Lord in China; he had obtained his Licentiate and Doctorate in Moral Theology in Italy; and he had

lectured at both the Catholic Theological Institute of Singapore and St Francis Xavier Major Seminary.

Since we both believe in research rigour, we respected each other's views on writing. I valued his feedback on my article on *'Christmas Day and Purgatory Souls'* and he sought my opinions on his special book for the 15th Station of the Cross in our parish: *'Rejoice, the Lord is risen! A guide to the Garden of the Resurrection at St Joseph's Church'*.

There is a lighter side to Msgr Peter. When he got used to my way of proclaiming the Word of God, he joked that I should do so at the Mandarin Mass – knowing that I was not able to read Mandarin even though I had worked in Taipei for an international advertising agency!

He is also caring and considerate. He knew I was passionate about preparing for my Scripture readings to proclaim effectively, so he gave me his 2019 Canadian Edition of the *'Workbook for Lectors, Gospel Readers and Proclaimers of the Word'*. Once when we had lunch at Hillion's Kopitiam, he wanted to pay for his lunch, but I insisted on treating him; so, he ended lunch by buying a plate of fruits for us to share!

Msgr Peter also loves the outdoors, going on group walks with parishioners. Alicia and I will forever remember the trip on 3 January 2026, when he led a group of over 30 parishioners to trek 5 km from our parish to the original Kranji church site that Fr Anatole Mauduit had established in 1846!

I have enjoyed his homilies, delivered in his powerful booming voice in our church and at the Catholic Spirituality Centre, where he is also Spiritual Director. I have notes of what he had preached over the years, for example, responding to God's call and sharing His Good News; fasting from gossip and electronic games; and treasuring the joy of Jesus in our lives.

Fr Lourdusamy Prasanna (ordained 2015)

Fr Lourdusamy from the Congregation of Heralds of Good News in India is the youngest in parish service, having joined us in January 2023. Although I have had less interactions with him, he has given me joy in some small ways.

When Fr Lourdusamy first spoke in our church to introduce himself, he made the whole congregation laugh! He joked that when he was walking up to the church, someone had mistaken him for an altar boy because of his youth and size!

Behind his small frame lies a dynamic voice and insightful preaching. Here are some of his homily gems: internal preparation is more important than external preparation; be grateful for our blessings and gifts; and modern leprosy exists in society, expressed through behaviour like hatred and anger.

I also value his flexibility during Holy Hour on 2 January 2026. The theme was '*The Word of Christ dwells among you*' (Col 3:16) and Scripture readings included John (15:1-5, 9-11) on '*I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower*'. Knowing my passion also for proclaiming The Word, Fr Lourdusamy asked me to read some of his sections!

Fr Christopher Lee (ordained 2005)

Fr Chris, as he is popularly known, grew up around the Church of St Stephen at Salim Road and became Parish Priest of St Joseph's Church (Bukit Timah) in 2017.

I find him stoic, decisive, appreciative and wise. He has his Cross to carry over the years, but he carries on bravely to look after his flock. Alicia and I felt his pain when a churchgoer stabbed him in his mouth during Communion on 9 November 2024. Despite still having stitches in his mouth, I met him one evening when he was going to his usual parish meeting!

During the COVID 19 lockdown in 2020, Fr Chris galvanised the Audio-Visual Team and the Lector Ministry to ensure that the faithful could still attend weekly online Masses. After lectors submitted audio recordings of their assigned Scripture readings, Fr Chris listened to all of them!

When Fr Peter was appointed as Vicar General for the Archdiocese of Singapore from 1 January 2023, I remember Fr Chris taking time from his extremely busy schedule to attend a '*Break Open the Word*' meeting of the Lector Ministry in July 2023. We valued his continued interest in our Ministry.

I experienced Fr Chris' decisiveness in April 2021 during discussions on the vision, mission and pillars of our parish. There were different variations of phrasings, so Fr Chris clearly confirmed as follows:

Vision – A vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church, under the Patronage of St Joseph;

Mission – To nourish faith in a loving outreaching community; and

Three Pillars – Faith Formation, Community-building and Outreach.

Fr Chris is also appreciative of varied talents of parishioners. You can tell by the various gifted people in the Parish Council and diverse Ministries of the parish. Personally, I am humbled that he had asked me to contribute monthly Bulletin articles leading to the 180th Anniversary of our parish in 2026. I learned so much from this project!

Spiritually, I have also gained through Fr Chris' wisdom during his easy-to-understand homilies. For example, Christ and not material things should reign in our heart; do not worry about tomorrow as

God will provide in His own way; the Holy Family is a model for us; we are all called to holiness; and blessed are the foolish, humble, lowly, and weak.

Conclusion

I treasure every memory of our three priests. They have enriched me spiritually, intellectually and emotionally.

Alicia and I, and many parishioners, will miss interacting with Fr Chris, Msgr Peter and Fr Lourdusamy. We pray for God's abundant blessings on them as they move to other churches.

Fr Christopher Lee was initially assigned as Parish Priest of Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary but will now be on sabbatical leave for health reasons. We wish him speedy recovery to continue serving God and His people.

Msgr Peter Zhang will be Assistant Rector of Cathedral of the Good Shepherd while Fr Lourdusamy Prasanna will be Assistant Parish Priest of Church of St Stephen.

Peter Ling is with the Lector Ministry and Guest Editor of The Carpenter.



Our Priests with members of the Lector Ministry



陈中明、韦海霞

1846年，莫迪神父在武吉知马路尽头与克兰芝河交汇处建立了一个传教前哨站。他与华人基督徒一起建造了一座奉圣若瑟为主保的亚答屋圣堂。随后，他们在1847年7月建了一所学校和一座疗养院。到了1849年，圣若瑟堂已经有500多名华人基督徒。这些进入新加坡内陆地区的基督徒，面临着许多生存上的威胁。除了热带疾病之外，还有遍布全岛的老虎威胁，甘蜜和胡椒种植的经济不稳定性，以及躲入丛林中的华人私会党的侵扰等。

1849年，私会党对定居内陆的基督徒进行了第一次攻击。1851年爆发了一场规模更大，波及全岛的袭击，大部分基督徒的种植园被夷为平地。据说在此次暴行中，有500名华人基督徒被屠杀。1852年，圣若瑟堂迁到位于武吉知马路的现址。

（摘自：陈丽慧,刘伟强著《新加坡华人天主教社群史》

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当我得知本堂华委将在新年首周六组织一场“寻根徒步活动”，以迎接新年并庆祝本堂成立180周年时，我提前在网上查阅了详情，这让我对1月3日的活动充满了期待。

2026年1月3日的天气格外宜人，既没有倾盆大雨，也没烈日炎炎。在张思谦蒙席和张利勇神父的带领下，我们32人的团队从本堂出发，沿着旧铁路轨道前行，仅在指定的站点诵念玫瑰经，其余时间则用于默想和分享。走在草丛中，我低眼望去，看到一片片灌木丛，这让我想起家乡的“芦苇荡”，以及抗日战争那段血腥残酷的岁月。我想起我曾去那里游览，坐在小船上，听着导游的讲解，却分不清东西南北。我记起那些英勇的烈士，他们甘愿做“叛徒”，引诱凶残野蛮的鬼子进入“芦苇荡”，而红军早在那里埋伏多时……，厮杀声在我耳边不绝于耳……。

低头看的是绿色的杂草和其中的各样野花，抬头又看见鸟儿在天空中自由翱翔。我真的很想知道，莫迪神父是怎样从零开始建立起这个传教前哨站——即奉圣若瑟为主保的圣若瑟圣堂的雏型、学校、养老院，以及所有相关团体。后辈神父们又如何在这基础上继续发展壮大呢？尽管经历了第一次世界大战和第二次世界大战的严峻考验，面临各种危险威胁，它们依然屹立在新加坡这片国土上，成为时代的缩影。如果不是主的亲自庇佑，谁会相信呢？

我想起特蕾莎修女请求“以修女身份投身到穷人去”的申请获得批准时，当她走出修道院，面对着没有工作、没有收入、

没有住处时，她感到孤独和无助，更深深体会到孤儿的痛苦。她眼含热泪说道：“主啊，除了祢，没有人支持我。我信靠祢的召唤。求祢不要丢下我。”我想，当年那些先辈神父们大概也有同感；他们可能从未料到，许多年后，圣若瑟堂会发展成这么一座美丽、庄严而宁静的教堂。他们凭着坚毅的意志和全然的信赖，谱写了一段传奇。

来到武吉知马路尽头与克兰芝河交汇处，仅存的“1847”石碑诉说着这里发生的不同寻常的故事。





重新拾起 信仰

甘沛昀

从小到大，我与耶稣的联系断断续续。印象中，在我很小的时候、或者说从我能记事起，我就在教会里领洗了。不过，那段记忆相当模糊，如今只剩下零星的片段。那时我还在台湾，是母亲带我认识了天主、引领我亲近信仰。长大后，我来到新加坡，在新的环境中组建了自己的家庭，似乎渐渐忘记了每天与主交谈的重要性。倒不是说我完全忘记了，而是我逐渐不再在意，不再像以前那样把主放在心上了。

有一天，电话响起，带来了我最不愿听到的消息——我的母亲，那位一直信靠主并活出信仰的人，去世了。那一刻，我感到一种说不出的失落与空虚。后来，当我看到她

的朋友们对她的怀念，看到她留下的那些带不走的小笔记，以及摆放在客厅里那些零零落落的圣经小语录，我才真正被触动。仿佛即使母亲已经离世，她留下的所有事物仍不断提醒我：不要忘记主，也不要忘记自己曾经也是主所眷顾和疼爱的孩子。

从那一刻起，我决定重新找回那个“被主眷顾的自己”。感恩在一个机缘下，我来到新加坡的圣若瑟堂，这真是一个非常美好的开始。

第一次见到莲姐，我便感到有一股很深沉的亲切感。她就像一位妈妈，眼中充满慈爱，又透着坚定。她对我说：“多来这里，听听看。”这句话深深打动了我。对我来说，它不仅是一份邀请，更一声温柔的呼唤：“回家吧，我们都在这里。”那一刻，

我感到久违的安宁，好像一个漂泊的旅人终于找到了可称之为家的地方。

刚加入这个团体时，我常觉得自己就像一只迷途的小羊，不知道该把自己放在哪里。面对大家，我感到陌生，也不知所措。感谢主，让我在这里遇见了一位特别投缘的“泉英姐”。当时，她的膝盖很不舒服，每走一步都有些不自然的倾斜。我内心涌起一股强烈的渴望，想要照顾她、于是自然而然地走近她、陪伴在她身边。我想，也许这就是天主教在教导我如何去爱人、如何在生活中实践关怀吧。于是，我顺从内心的呼唤，一点一点地融入了这个大家庭。

慕道班的日子过得很快，转眼间就结束了。但对我来说，这并不是结束，而是一个全

新的开始。在这段旅程中，我重新认识了我的信仰，也重新认识了自己。我也学会安静，重新与主对话，并再次感受到主从未离开过我。原来，无论我走得多远，或忘记多久，主一直在那里，等待我回头，等待我回家。

我由衷的感谢大家，感谢每一位陪伴我、接纳我、鼓励我的兄弟姐妹。谢谢你们用温暖的爱，让我在陌生中感受到归属感，在软弱中重拾力量。感谢慕道班团队：你们的帮助、关心和陪伴，不仅是我的支持，更是一份很深的恩典；因为有你们，我在信仰的道路上不再孤单，也找到继续前行的勇气。愿天主降福你们，愿我能把所领受到的爱传递给更多的人。



从慕道到领洗

王円妮

参加天主教慕道班的这段时间，对我来说是一段安静而深刻的旅程。从最初的陌生与好奇，到慢慢体会到信仰带来的平安，我的内心有了明显的改变。

让我印象最深刻的，是慕道班里每一位兄弟姐妹的陪伴与支持。通过分享，我们互相扶持、倾听彼此的疑惑，这让我感受到一种温暖而真挚的联结。这种关系，不只是学习上的交流，更像是一种心灵上的同行。

有一次，我向神父请教了“骆驼穿过针眼”的比喻。作为一名在日常生活中总是忙忙碌碌的上班族，我常感到被忙碌与责任所困，也曾疑惑，这样的生活是否就像那头无法穿过针眼的骆驼，难以接近信仰。神父的回答让我释然，他告诉我，生活与信仰同样重要，它们

并非相互对立，而是在日常生活中可以相互融合。这番话解开了我心中的结，帮助我重新理解信仰在现实生活中的意义。

与此同时，我要向所有授课的老师、修女和神父表达衷心的感谢。他们耐心地讲解教理，并结合自身经验解答我们的疑问，这让我对信仰有了更深刻的理解与体会。我还要感谢所有在幕后辛勤付出的工作人员，从课程安排到每一项活动的精心筹备，他们让我感受到被重视与被关怀。

如今，我已领洗并正式成为教会的一员，这不仅是一个重要的时刻，更是一段新旅程的开始。怀着满心的感恩与谦卑，我希望能在这一条道路上继续学习并实践我的信仰，让信仰在我生命中生根发芽、茁壮成长，为我带来持久的平安与力量。

