



I can do all  
things through  
Christ who  
strengthens  
me.  
*Phil 4:13*

# The Witness

Catholic School of Evangelisation Australia Inc.

August 2019 Newsletter

## THE TRINITY - THE TRANSFIGURATION

When I was much younger there were stories from Scripture and aspects of faith I found very puzzling. I remember my grade 2 teacher, just prior to Trinity Sunday, saying the Trinity is a mystery. If teachers and learned theologians found this a mystery my seven year old brain would have no chance of figuring it out. Later I discovered that although my understanding is limited, I can experience the Trinity working within me whenever I ask. God the Father's all powerful love, the saving, redeeming and forgiving presence of Jesus and the comfort and consolation of the Holy Spirit are always available. The Holy Spirit gives each of us gifts and invites us to use them for His honour and glory. Gathering together for Eucharist is a perfect example of how we can experience the action of the Trinity in our lives. We are then commanded to share this grace with others.

The story of the Transfiguration was another puzzle. What did it mean? How could it apply to me? We would often be lead as a prayer group to read and re-read this story. Jesus was about to set out for Jerusalem and the cross. He took His chosen three with Him up the mountain. He needed confirmation from His father as to the right path forward and during this amazing experience His glory was revealed, the Father's voice was heard and Peter, James and John were prepared and strengthened for their journey as disciples. The presence of Moses the great Jewish leader and Elijah the greatest of the prophets added to the significance and solemnity of the occasion.

Matthew tells us that Jesus' face shone like the sun and Mark that His clothes became dazzlingly white. His interior Godliness was revealed through skin and clothing. The question for us is are we allowing God's transforming power to change us and renew and transform us so that others will be drawn to experience His love and mercy also. Are the people in our lives blessed by the presence of

God through us? Let us pray that the transfiguration of our world and our Church will be made manifest as each of us surrenders more and more to God's will. May our words of kindness encourage and strengthen others especially those experiencing pain and hardship. May our prayer be constant for all those in need.

At present the Melbourne School is preparing the MOSES course to be held in November. Participation in this program is a great way to experience growth in leadership and strength to obey.

Ann Serong

### Beyond the Desert



### The Life of Moses

A study of the life of Moses, especially as it models the attitudes required for us as Christian leaders.

The course will take participants through the Schools of Pharaoh, of Midian and of the Desert, to learn specific spiritual and leadership lessons.

It unveils the deep depression of Moses, his requests of God, and his trials.

It discusses the qualities of his collaborators and the power of a leader's intercessory prayer.

This course is especially beneficial to those in leadership positions as they learn, from the experience of Moses, that no leader 'owns' their position, it always belongs to God as does the work to which they are called.

See back page for registration.

## The Witness

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### Catholic School of Evangelisation **MISSION STATEMENT**

**To contribute to the formation of evangelising parishes by offering a formation program which:**

- ▶ FORMS DISCIPLES
- ▶ TRAINS EVANGELISERS
- ▶ ESTABLISHES PARISH EVANGELISATION TEAMS

## BOLDNESS

***“Enable your servants to speak your word with all boldness.” (Acts 4:29)***

Peter and John had just spent the night in jail for healing a man who couldn't walk. The next morning, authorities released them after sternly warning them never again to proclaim Jesus. So what did they do? Return to the Christian community and pray—not for protection, but for courage to continue.

Boldness is one of the key signs of holiness Pope Francis identifies in his apostolic exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*. He praises *“the freedom of a life open to God and to others”* (129). That sounds great, doesn't it? Wouldn't we all like a bit more boldness? But this can also sound daunting, especially if we tend to be timid or private about our faith.

Well, did you know that you already have the spiritual gift of courage?

To help explain this, the Holy Father gives us a new take on a familiar image. You've probably seen the famous painting of Jesus knocking on a closed door (from Revelation 3:20). Pope Francis invites us to reverse the image. Jesus, who dwells within us through Baptism, is knocking on the inside of our heart's door. He wants to be let out into the world around us so that his love can touch and transform the people we meet. As Pope Francis says, *“We are weak, yet we hold a treasure that can enlarge us and make those who receive it better and happier”* (131).

God confirmed this truth when he shook the room where Peter and John and the other disciples prayed for courage. They had just been released from prison for proclaiming Christ boldly, and after praying they went out and continued to proclaim him boldly. They had what was required; they just needed to act on it.

This same gift of boldness lives in you through the Holy Spirit. So put it to use. Start thinking in a fresh way about the opportunities you have to make Jesus better known. It can be as simple as taking that one small brave step to open the door for Jesus. **Look at one stranger in the eye and ask his name. Do just one unexpected act of kindness. Watch for just one opportunity to pray with someone for comfort or healing. You will see how God affirms each act of boldness!**

“Lord, thank you for the gift of boldness. Help me to remain confident in you today.”

Psalm 2:1-9. John 3:1-8  
(Word Amongst Us meditation for 29th April 2019)



## Pentecost Weekend - Adelaide



It is always with some excitement and also some trepidation of having forgotten something important, that we always approach that wonderful and great Feast of Pentecost. However all trepidation dissolves into nothingness as soon as we start praising God with songs that invite the Holy Spirit to come upon us with new Power.

The theme of the Pentecost Weekend Retreat was 'Lord Send us Your Spirit'. Indeed it was with this expectation that 60 odd people flowed through the doors on both Saturday and Sunday. We had the blessing of two preachers for this weekend. Fr Selva and Fr Josy and two beautiful music ministries.

Having a presenter with us for the first time is always a bit nerve racking but we had no need to fret. Fr Selva delivered his topics with passion, gentleness, humour and to my surprise, some new analogies I had never heard of before. As we know we have all had many teaching on the Holy Spirit, but I was pleasantly surprised by the challenge that Fr Selva set before us to first understand the Holy Spirit and then live our life like we believe He is in control of our lives. As he said, we often say that the Holy Spirit leads our lives but the fruit of our actions, attitudes, behaviours and spoken words witness to the contrary.

He spoke about 'Two Extremes':

- ◆ Those who magnify the Word but ignore the ministry of the Holy Spirit.
- ◆ Those who magnify the ministry of the Holy Spirit above God's Word and chase after signs, miracles and wonders.

There is a balance to be had: The Word of God uplifted by the Power of the Holy Spirit will make us great witnesses in our world. The Word of God spoken under the influence of the Holy Spirit will plant seeds in people's hearts that the Holy Spirit Himself will water and nourish to bring forth Divine Life, not just in the heart of the people we witness to, but also in our own life. He encouraged us to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit even when we get impatient with God and decide our way is not a bad way after all. I remember vividly one of Nan Deakin's favourite sayings, "Get out of God's way and let Him get on with it." Fr Selva said more or less the same thing in a roundabout way. The Holy Spirit is the "Gift Giver". We all know 1 Cor 12 which describes the spiritual gifts given to believers in order that we may function as the Body of Christ on earth. The Holy Spirit is also the 'Fruit Producer'. When we move in the Spirit, using the gifts He Himself has given us, then He will Himself harvest the fruits of peace, joy, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. ( Gal 5: 22).

Very bluntly Fr Selva reminded us that if all these fruits (and more) are not being harvested in our lives then the Holy Spirit is not the driving force behind our life. PHEW! He reminded us that we are in the world but not of this world. BUT sometimes it is not easy to let go of what the world expects from us.

Politically correct behaviour is the catch cry that will drag even committed Christians with the current trend. Fr Selva likened us to fish. He suggested that if we go against the current it will be a struggle, but if we give in and flow with the current then we will be dead Christians. He explained that healthy fish migrate against the current but fish moving with the current are in fact dead and just get tossed around with the flow. (That is apparently a fact of nature.)

Fr Selva expanded about the role of the Holy Spirit in Christian lives and encouraged us to be always open to where He is leading us. We've all heard the phrase - Bloom where you are planted. He gave us a story that gives the same emphasis of being aware of what God is doing in our lives, without looking for epic ways before we trust in the providence of God. He called it 'Lower your bucket: Taste and see.' (see page 5).

He covered at length, backed by Scripture, how our society can be transformed by people who, like the early disciples, were so transformed that people noticed how they loved and related to one another. If we could remember the value that each person has in God then our world would change. The sad reality is that we don't value each other the way God values us and even as Christians, we are conditioned by the value other people put on us. He related a beautiful story that touched me deeply, about the Value of Life that can only be realised by the Power of the Holy Spirit.

I can relate to St John when he said "If I was to write all that Jesus did and said the whole world would not hold all the books." That is, of course, an exaggeration in this case, but there was a lot more that Fr Selva shared that resonated with me and many others judging by the feedback. Of course Mass was beautiful as well as a time of Adoration but not without drama. One of the participants fainted and as we waited for an ambulance to arrive, the two Tanzanian sisters Hiacinta and Laetitia started reciting the Rosary which brought the patient back to consciousness. She told me afterwards, that she felt so peaceful as she came around and heard everyone praying the Hail Mary. God works in mysterious ways.

The Big Day of Pentecost dawned a little chilly but starting off with a good dose of Praise and Worship by the husband and wife duo Tony & Mary McAllister which was exactly what the doctor ordered to warm the cockles of our hearts and make them beat a little faster with the expectation of a beautiful Pentecost Mass. Fr Josy was the celebrant for our Pentecost Mass. It was a beautiful way to celebrate the Church's birthday with a community of people so eager to be fed on God's Word and the Eucharist. These weekends can only become a reality because of the dedication and hard work of all the team. **Praise Be God Forever.**

# Preparation for Pentecost - Adelaide

By Carmen Sylvester

Continuing in the vein of our first Faith on Fire Seminar our speaker Fr Stephen Kulathumkarott (yes a mouthful) decided that for our Pre-Pentecost Faith on Fire in May, that he would expand on the Parable of the Weeds (or the Parable of the Darnel).

One of the comments that came through after this seminar, apart from the usual "Wow that was deep" or "How good is he," was "This priest is the best of the best". We felt especially blessed by his passion, enthusiasm for the Word of God and by his teaching skills. Of course we agree with that assessment. His unpacking of the Parable of the Weeds from Matt 13:24-30 was quite refreshing and thought provoking.

Some of his points were -

- ▶ This Parable teaches the **different stages** of the Kingdom of God started in Jesus Christ.
- ▶ This Parable speaks of the **Mission** of Jesus Christ - The Gospel.
- ▶ This Parable teaches the reality of the **co-existence of evil** until the end of time.
- ▶ This Parable warns us of the **essential temptation** during the progressive stage - uprooting the evil.
- ▶ This Parable proactively invites us **to be involved fully in the world where evil persists and to be good and grow in it.**
- ▶ As we pray 'Lead us not into temptation - Deliver us from the Evil One'.

## A linear and successive progress of the Kingdom of God (Human history)

- ▶ A small beginning, a gradual growth and a definite and glorious ending.
- ▶ The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of **their Father.**
- ▶ **Jesus will hand over the kingdom to the Father 1 Cor15:24.**

**The End of the age** happens just before the handing over.

**The Mission of Jesus Christ was to bring back the world to its original blessing:** Original sin came later! **Gen 1:28** - *"God blessed them, and God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it."* **Gen 1:30** - *"I have given every green plant for food."*

Then came the **false and deceptive** claim: your **nature** is not good. Your **natural blessing is doubtful** - you are naked - Your **eternity** is questioned - you are limited - You are not OK - ugly and naked are the false claims of the enemy. The Enemy misinterpreted the direction of life to the full as a control on his freedom. Not to eat.

You can be God, knowing good and evil. You determine the good and evil. You become the authority of goodness and evil.

In Jesus is a new start (he calls it) the Kingdom of God = reality verses deception.

- ▶ The Kingdom of God Jesus brought to the world - is a real world- the original created world - **where God is all in all and He provides every good to His creation.**
- ▶ Yet the false claim **still exists** - that you lack goodness - for your goodness and well-being is the product of your own discernment and effort.

The Reality is:

Everyone matters and everyone is centre - peripheries become centre;

Every broken heart and relationship is to be mended;

Everyone is created for joy and life to the full;

All humanity and creation are to be a glorious and eternal song of joy.

## The Co-Existence of evil until the end time.

- ▶ The pattern of transformation is always death (Evil) transformed and not death (Evil) avoided.
- ▶ Divine life is so big, so deep, and so indestructible, that it is able to include death.

The genius of Jesus' teaching is that He reveals that God uses tragedy, suffering, pain, betrayal, and death itself, not to wound us but in fact, to bring us to a larger identity: *"Unless the single grain of wheat loses its shell, it remains just a single grain."* Jn 12:24. The shell must first crack for expanded growth to happen.

## Uprooting the evil before the end time is a critical temptation.

The challenge and temptation of this particular phase is to divide people between wheat and weeds.

1. It is not easy to identify wheat from weeds.
2. Roots are intertwined below the ground; rooting out the weeds would uproot the wheat as well, doing more damage to the crop than leaving the weeds to grow.

We cannot simply differentiate by external appearance those who are already in the Kingdom and those **who need to be in.**

**People say find the good one and leave the bad ones.**

**This parable invites us to find the good in people - and ignore the bad in them.**

**Concentrate on the Goodness.**

Continued p. 5 .....

## Preparation for Pentecost - Adelaide continued from p. 4 .....

Moreover, the selection is under the authority of the Son of Man who has gained everyone's soul. Reapers (Angels) will do it; human beings are not authorised for it.

The Father of Positive psychology Martin Seligman, asks the question: Are you *Permalicious*??? Something I learnt on that day. The PERMA are the five pillars of wellbeing.

P - Positive Emotions

E - Engagement

R - Relationships

M - Meaning and Purpose of Life

A - Achievement

The awareness of PERMA can help you increase your well-being by focusing on combinations of feeling good, living meaningfully, establishing supportive and friendly relationships, accomplishing goals and being fully engaged with life.

### Lead us not into temptation.

The basic temptation of the people in the Kingdom of God is to exclude people - JESUS has an inclusive world vision.

Why does evil still remain? Why can't we terminate the evil right now?

Answer: God's Kingdom is established through gradual growth. It reveals to us God's long suffering, allowing time for people to repent. The temptation is to purify the Community, as if we are doing some good for God. While the reality is that God is patiently waiting for repentance. Mine!!!

Who am I to judge?

It is difficult to distinguish between the wheat and the weeds in the initial stage – the true nature will only become evident over time. Only by their maturity (fruit bearing) can the growth be



distinguished as wheat or weeds.

Jn 16:2 - *"Indeed, an hour is coming when those who kill you will think that by doing so, they are offering worship to God."*

We will do well to pray: **Deliver Us From The Evil One.**

### Be clear that Satan has his plan for you.

God can change the DNA of a weed.

- The thief on the cross, is an example of last minute change and reprieve.
- Peter: Get behind me Satan, Mt 16:23. Peter was a stumbling block, yet Jesus will entrust His future mission to him.

Can a weed become wheat?! Yes, in the Kingdom of God. After all what is a weed?

A weed is what is found out of place. That which is out of place!!! Out of the order that God created.

The scandal is something **within the person**, rather than the whole person. It comes from the human heart.

Matt 15:18-20 - *"For out of the human heart come evil intentions,*

*murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander."* DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE.

**The Kingdom of God on this earth and present time is like a hospital (not like a prison). God allows good and evil to grow together for a transformation to take place in the evil ones by the courageous and strong rooted influences of the good ones in the Kingdom.**

**Amen to that. Truly a Blessed day.**

The Wheat bend in worship to their creator & the weeds stand tall in defiance. (Apparently that is how you tell them apart at the end of the season)

## LOWER YOUR BUCKETS - Taste and See

More than a century ago, a great sailing ship was stranded off the coast of South America. Week after week the ship lay there in the still waters with not a hint of a breeze.

The captain was desperate; the crew was dying of thirst. And then, on the far horizon, a steamship appeared, headed directly towards them. As it drew near, the captain called out, **"We need water! Give us water!"** The steamship replied, **"Lower your buckets where you are."** The captain was furious at this cavalier response **but called out again, "Please, give us water."** But the steamer gave the same reply, **"Lower your buckets where you are!"** And with that they sailed away!

The captain was beside himself with anger and despair and he went below. But a little later, when

no one was looking, a yeoman lowered a bucket into the sea and then tasted what he brought up: **It was perfectly sweet, fresh water!**

For you see, **the ship was just out of sight of the mouth of the Amazon.** And for all those weeks they had been sitting right on top of all the fresh water they needed!

What we are really seeking is already inside us, waiting to be discovered, waiting to be embraced: The Holy Spirit of God, living within us from the moment of our Baptism. The Holy Spirit is saying to us this very moment from deep in our hearts, **"Lower your buckets where you are. Taste and see!"**

**Come Holy Spirit! Fill our hearts and set us on fire! Amen.**

## Cindy Eggington - Testimony



My family upbringing was non-Christian. When he was young, Dad was an evangelical lay youth-preacher in the Church of Christ, but had backslidden for many years. Mum was his second wife. My Mum already had two children of her own, so I was the only child of their marriage, the only girl and the youngest among five half-brothers. While I grew up moving around Australia, my childhood years were spent mainly in the Northern Territory. Traditionally, both sides of my family were from a Catholic background, although Dad's father became a Freemason and my maternal grandparents had become Communist supporters later in their lives. I first heard about Jesus at high school in NSW, but was distrustful of Christians, because they didn't appear to practice what they preached.

When I was 18 years old, I was working on an Aid Project with my Dad in Myanmar (formerly Burma). This suited me because I was very interested in Buddhism and Eastern Philosophy. After some months, and because of the increasing political tensions affecting the young people there, I returned to the Sydney suburbs, Australia. About that time a Christian social worker was assisting a family member. One weekend a certain lady invited me to a Christian Life Centre service. At the church, the altar call asked for people experiencing nightmares. I thought my life is a nightmare, and went up. The altar call treatment was harsh, (loud rebuking and hitting the forehead), but I believe I asked the Lord to be filled with the Holy Spirit about that time. Afterwards, I attended a bridging course at the church to learn about Jesus, but after a while thought, 'This is not for me.' At this time I got by keeping myself active and attending a job-course.

A year later when I was 20 years old, I was living with other young people in Sydney inner city. As my furniture was on the floor, I was using a book with a thick plastic sleeve as a table. One day, I thought I might take a look inside the book and see what it said. It was the New Jerusalem bible. As I was reading a bright light surrounded me and an invisible sword moved in and around me, coming down through every word. I was frozen in time looking at the page. A short while later a person appeared to me in my body. As I was sitting down, I could clearly read the name on His right mid-thigh, 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords'. He stood me up to look at me straight in the mirror. His eyes were radiant blue like the hottest flame in the fire, and His hair was like white wool. The power that surrounded Him was like a universal force field. Afterwards, I returned to my chaotic life!

them at a tough time. On the second day I called Crisis Line for help. The man at Crisis Line started shouting down the phone, "For I know the plans I have for you,

plans for a hope and a future..." The words instantly smashed me into pieces. I started bawling and became very confused. The man at Crisis Line told me as long as I stay on the phone I would be safe. Because the family member was not acting their normal self, I hung up so I could deal with the situation. Instantaneously, the phone rang from the Crisis Centre, asking for my address for someone to pick me up. After quickly gathering some personal items, I fell down at the front of the house frozen with fear. After the car arrived and we were driving away, one of the Christians laughingly referred to the family member as a psycho. I was deeply hurt, as I loved and cared for this person very much.

When we got back to a flat I was asked by the Christians if I had used Tarot cards and when I said yes, they divided my possessions and left me with some of my clothes. After the group prayer asking me to accept the Lord Jesus as my Saviour, I sat apart from the group. The next day I was dropped off at drug rehabilitation house in Kings Cross. After two weeks there, a working nurse asked me if I was a heroin addict. I said no, and I had never been one. She gave me the choice of returning to the street the next day or going to a farm called Teen Challenge. I asked if the farm had horses and upon a positive answer, the next day a minivan arrived to take me to Teen Challenge.

At Teen Challenge, the young residents had no access to TV, newspapers or the outside world and were allowed one supervised phone call on the weekend. We worked in the morning and studied the gospel in the afternoon, with praise and worship in between; the food was very basic and included fast food. Our income was managed by Teen Challenge, and subsidised by the government (sickness benefit) with a portion of money put aside for our graduation after one whole year. One worship session, I experienced entering the Kingdom when I saw the Lord on the Cross. I immediately prophesied to the group about the Lord Jesus having no sin. Shortly after, I asked the Pastor to be baptised. He was reluctant, but chose to conduct a group baptism in the ocean at Scots Head a few weeks later. The very next day I turned 21!

Before I turned 21 I visited a sibling to assist

Continued . . . P.7

## Cindy Eggington - Testimony continued . . . . .



Because of my different background, I began to be judged by some of the residents and the people running the course. Besides feeling frustrated, I also began to feel very weak and increasingly ill. The people at Teen Challenge began to persecute me daily, calling me names such as the Devil, and accusing me of lying about being ill. One evening the Holy Spirit asked me if I wanted to die there or to live. By this time I was finding it hard to walk. The next day I crawled to the Pastor's house some distance along a dirt road, knowing he was with the group and asked his wife to use the phone. My parents drove up at once to pick me up. Overall, I had spent about 3 months living at Teen Challenge. Later that day the family GP diagnosed me with viral septicaemia, (blood poisoning) contracted while I was living in the city months earlier.

Immediately after leaving Teen Challenge, I received prayer from a Sydney cell group for my illness with great effect, but unprotected and unaware, I fell into the Devil's snare and temptation as he was prowling around. At the same time my parents were moving to Northern NSW. After arriving and a family disagreement, I caught the night bus to Brisbane. After two weeks sleeping on the floor of a family friend, I found a flat of my own. At this time I started researching and following the Israelite/Jewish faith and culture to get to know the Lord better. Because of ongoing harmful relations with family and Christians when I sought their help, I pursued my long-term dream of returning to Alice Springs. When my car broke down on the way, I had it fixed and returned it to my parent's house and caught a plane.

My life in Alice was Holy Spirit filled. God worked mightily through signs and wonders. The Lord Jesus was very present in my life, walking with me every day. Because of the racial segregation of the congregation in the Baptist church, I started looking for a place where I could feel one in the Body of Christ. A year beforehand, Pope John Paul II had visited the Aboriginal Communities and celebrated their culture in the faith. One day when walking past the Catholic Church, I witnessed this and was inspired to start attending Mass. Once, when I was experiencing distress I picked up a free rosary and pamphlet from the foyer of the church. When I got home, the beads fell apart as I was praying, but I persisted and completed my first Rosary. In that Instant Mother Mary interceded in my life and turned everything upside down!

### Chapter 2

After a year I moved to a place outside town and busied myself with



seasonal farm work. From the beginning the Lord Jesus had gifted me with a ministry in music, so I regularly performed in town as a musician/songwriter, poet and an artist. After a while I began to backslide into the world and experience emotional shock. Two years later, I left Alice Springs when housing was not available where I wanted to live. My dog, cat and I moved down to Northern NSW intending to move on, but ended up staying with family and my matriarchal grandmother on a small working farm, which was very healing and comforting. I attended the local Baptist church, as well as a Christian-Israelite church. Later, I followed my love of art by attending drama school and singing academy and moved into town.

After four years I felt a call to Youth work, following my positive experiences with Aboriginal Youth in Alice Springs and moved to Sydney to start a Youth Work diploma. While the course provided me with all kinds of information, I was not actively seeking the Lord Jesus. Terribly backslidden; I was barely coping with a 'sex, drugs and rock and roll' lifestyle. After a couple of desperate years, I prayed a novena prayer to St Jude that I found in the back of a newspaper. The Lord Jesus instantly pulled me up. I changed my lifestyle and started working with young people with a disability.

After a couple of years working, I travelled overseas back-packing overland from Ireland to Israel. When I returned, I moved interstate to South Australia. The country south of Adelaide reminded me of my childhood and of Israel. Wanting to stay as close to the original church as possible, I started attending a small Catholic church called 'Mary, the First Disciple'. I began working in viticulture and resumed working with young people in the community.

After attending the 'Mary the First Disciple' for a couple of years, a Catholic parishioner found I was not confirmed as a Catholic. In May 2005 after attending RCIA, I was conditionally baptised and confirmed as a Catholic. Through my community work, I was introduced to University, where I studied and worked as a tutor and later as a volunteer in East Timor, where I continued to visit friends for several years.

Two years ago I earned a Doctorate (PhD) about Secondary Trauma. One and a half years ago I moved to Melbourne, the place where my Dad and I were born. My Dad passed away a year ago. God has used my time in Melbourne to bring me closer to Him through His great mercy, healing and love. I am presently serving the Lord in Music Ministry and Church Service.

# THE POWER OF GOD REVEALED IN JGSS' GROWING LIONS

By Miss Wency C. Provido

Saturday August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019, I attended the 6:30 am Mass at Imus Cathedral when I heard the familiar account from the Gospel of Matthew about the beheading of John the Baptist. In the homily of the priest he focused on the act of beheading wherein he cited that it was not only John who had lost his head in that Gospel account but also the other characters like Herod, who lost his head because of power and the fear of losing it. Herodias who lost her head because of her selfish desires and her daughter **Salome**, who lost her head because she allowed her mother to manipulate her when she was pushed to ask for the head of John the Baptist on a platter, after her delighting dance performance.



Salome. Those times that I allowed others to dictate me, to manipulate me, it's like I was also beheaded, losing my own thinking, losing my own knowledge and understanding of what is good and what is right to do at the moment. But I thank the Good Lord who is forever faithful, that through His grace He is constantly reaching out to me, saving me from those 'dead' moments of my life, raising me to life again. Just like how He had been so gracious to the **"young man that He raised to life."**

Hearing the familiar name 'Salome' brought me to the depths of encountering 'The Puppet Girl' in 'The Seven Young People in the Gospels'. Thank you to the Catholic School of Evangelisation of Australia and Sr. Nelia, SJBP who deepened not only our knowledge and understanding of the persons and lives of these young people but also opened our eyes and hearts to the reality of their presence and persons in our own selves, in our own lives. I realised that there were times that I lived the life and person of



Indeed His love and His grace are always moving, always flowing, reaching out to those who are in need of them.

And from this deep reflection and realisation I remembered the seven young people that were with me when we took the course. I reached out to them asking how they've been doing and if they could still remember the course that we took together entitled '**The Seven Young People in the Gospels**' and how this course has somehow touched their lives. It was so heart-warming to receive the following replies and write-ups that speak of the internalisation and living out of what they have learned from the course. With so much joy I would like to share them with you.



*"Through the sessions and sharings, I felt that I understood my faith more. I discovered parts of the Gospel I never knew before. By reviewing the lives of the 7 young people, I learned more about building a better version of myself. I learned to be a person of love. A person that loves oneself, loves others and loves God."* - **Franchesca Mary Ronn S. Jiongco**  
(JGSS Pioneering Senior High School Student. Graduated Year 12 last June 8, 2019 **with High Honors, Service Awardee and AY Foundation National Discipline Awardee**)

*"The 7YPG Course really helped me grow as a person. I became a better version of myself. I learned to never give up whenever there are challenges that are on my way. I never focus on the negative side of life, instead, I open my heart and let Jesus take full control because I know in His hands, I am safe."*  
- **Shammah Jireh E. Ramos**  
(JGSS Pioneering Senior High School Student. Graduated Year 12 last June 8, 2019 **with Honors, Best in Performing Arts and Service Awardee**)



## THE POWER OF GOD REVEALED IN JGSS' GROWING LIONS

Continued from p. 8



*"The 7YPG course taught me that as a youthful member of my community I should always put Jesus in my heart. And even though I make mistakes I should not think of giving up in life because Jesus wants me to correct that mistake and be a better person. This course also helped me to know more about the people in the Gospel and how I can learn from them and apply these lessons in my life."*

**–Sophia Janelle M. Samillano**

(JGSS Year 12-ABM Student, commenced Year 11 **with Honors, Outstanding Performance in Research and Conduct Awardee.**)

*"In our course entitled 7YPG that we held last year, I learned that prayer is the most powerful above all. I also developed my faith in God. I said this because there were times that I encountered difficulties and most especially the worst problems in life and I just pray to the Lord that may He guide me all the time to surpass all these struggles in life."*

**–Fritz Jerald S. Taguines**

(JGSS Year 12-STEM Student, commenced Year 11 **with Honors**)



*"Through 7YPG I have learned many things which brought me closer to Jesus."*

*Firstly I've learned that money or any material thing can't genuinely make you satisfied and happy because material things and money won't last and they can be replaced with other things. The true fulfilling happiness comes from Jesus who gives us the treasure that is irreplaceable. Next to Jesus is another treasure which is our*

*family, who no matter what, will always be there for us and love us unconditionally.*

*Secondly I've learned that I should always decide for myself. Lately I've been caught in the middle of making necessary decisions and I always tend to let others decide for me, which leads to all the frustration and stress I felt, because I always overthink of the consequences of making a wrong decision. Thanks to 7YPG which taught me that Jesus and my family will be always there to guide me in the decisions that I make.*

*Lastly I've learned to let Jesus enter my heart and stay. Before, I wasn't close to Jesus but when I pray and talk to Him, I am enlightened spiritually. Now I am even closer to Jesus and grow as His follower to help make my fellow young people closer to Him.*

*Life is full of challenges. Like riding a roller coaster, a minute ago we were just happy and enjoying it, but later, in the middle of the ride we feel down, afraid and suffering from the consequences of our actions. But I realise now that I became a growing lion and I conquered all the failures and trials that I encountered. I will always remember 7YPG which taught me to never give up even though I fail and make mistakes because through these mistakes I can be the strongest lion that God wants me to be.*

**– Jessabeal F. Ylagan**

## A Reflection Of The EMMAUS COURSE By Miriam Markis

The journey of the two despondent Disciples in the Gospel walking to Emmaus after the death of Jesus on Calvary is well known to most people and is indeed a favourite of mine. So much so that the Emmaus Prayer Group was named after the story in the Gospels. It was a joy and a privilege then for the Emmaus Prayer Group to host the School of Evangelisation over a weekend and to hear our two presenters, Sandra and Emilia, unwrap the story in more detail as to what the Word is, what the Word does and what do we do with that Word.

Participants were actively involved in examining their own journeys and any similarities with the two disciples particularly in the areas of despondency and discouragement. As the disciples journeyed on towards the village of Emmaus, they meet Jesus who not only explained the Scriptures to them but accompanied them on the journey and then remained with them before they recognised Him in the breaking of bread. In the same way, we need the Holy Spirit sent by Jesus to explain the Scriptures to us today.

The course outlined the seven actions of the Word as a Lamp, a Sword, a Hammer, Water & Rain, Honey, a Seed and Nourishment that comes from the Word of God backed up by relevant scripture references and our own heartfelt reflections on our own continuing journeys. Our hearts, often tepid or disillusioned, need the Word to stir us into life-giving action. In my own case, I've experienced multiple effects of the Word and often-times needing the hammer effect, to discern the motives of my own heart. This has helped me to grow in self-examination on my own journey with the Lord. Indeed, I'm sure that each participant would have had cause for deep and meaningful reflection as there was time set aside to do so and for poignant sharing of our stories afterwards.

We also looked at the seven powerful effects of the Word i.e., that it is creative and therefore effective; a stumbling block and divisive for many; it saves and heals as witnessed by Jesus, the Word made flesh during His earthly ministry and is still effective today. It creates faith and converts the hearts of even the most hardened persons. It imparts the Holy Spirit to those who are thirsting for God. Communities are formed and these can produce the way to eternal life, to the Promised Land, which is our heavenly home. All good reasons why we need to hang on to the Word and spend time with the Word to hear God's voice for direction in our lives.



In the third aspect of the Word we learnt about seven attitudes and commitments in response to the Word. How to read and listen to the Word. The Word is to be believed. It is to be studied daily and examined carefully. Added reading such as the

CCC and other spiritual books (many were recommended) are good sources for verification of meaning of the scriptures. We need to pray the Word, using it often in our prayers. This can be quite powerful especially in times of dryness, darkness and other trying times in our lives. I find praying the Psalms quite powerful because they often express very human sentiments that I can relate to. We need to memorise the Word. We are also challenged to live the Word and help the seed to grow in our life's journey. Finally, the Word is to be proclaimed and we need to become emboldened disciples like the two on the road to Emmaus who immediately set out to return to Jerusalem to share the good news that Jesus is alive. Then our eyes too will be opened, and our hearts will be on fire as we spend time with the Lord. This we did by tearing down the Veil literally, which separates us from Him and by sitting in Adoration before Him. The power of the Holy Spirit was especially present in a moving way.

We meditated also on the various symbols of *The Synagogue of Israel*; the Menorah; the Kipper; the Tallit; the Yobel (ram's horn) The Shema - The Jews, for example, pray the 'Shema Israel' (Deut 6:4-9 which is contained in the *mezuzah*, often attached to the right door post of a Jewish home). We too might have a scripture verse that we hold on to and we shared this word with each other in the last segment with stories both relevant and heartfelt; the Fish and the five Greek letters symbolising 'Jesus Christ God's Son Saviour' and lastly, the Paschal Candle which is prepared at the Easter Vigil. Each section was powerfully presented and again interspersed with time for reflection.

The weekend was also filled with powerful praise and worship music and excerpts from films depicting relevant segments of scripture. Colourfully costumed, participants revelled in presenting characters from the Old Testament from Adam (me!!!), the Patriarch Abraham; the teachers of Israel such as the great Rabbi of Jerusalem as well as some of the Prophets such as Moses, Isaiah and Joel with insightful verses of scripture.

The Journey concluded with the Emmaus Eucharist where we walked slowly but surely towards the summit which is the Body and Blood of Christ. It was a most poignant moment and I daresay it was the moment when our eyes were opened to know and understand the wonder of this great mystery of Jesus with us. Truly our hearts did burn within us.

Finally, we shared our pearl of great price, i.e. the scripture verses that have meant so much to each of us on our journey. May the Lord of all Grace continue to walk with us on our own 'Emmaus' journey of life.



## Bat Kol Intensive – Bamidba – Book of Numbers:

On 30<sup>th</sup> June, I set off for Israel with Stephen Fernandes, my fellow student at Catholic Theological College Melbourne. We were both the recipients of part scholarships to study the Book of Numbers at the Bat Kol Institute in Jerusalem for 3 weeks.

We were located at the St Charles Hospice in the German Colony, an energetic walk away from the Old City and on the corner of none other than Bethlehem Road.

After dinner on the first night, we attended a welcome ceremony where we introduced ourselves and discovered that we were from many nations. We had a priest from Sao Paulo, Brazil; 3 Brazilian Brothers of Our Lady of Sion who have been studying in Israel; a young Filipino man who is a new addition to the Brothers of Sion in Israel; a Filipino nun who is presently studying in Toronto, Canada; a high school teacher also from Toronto; a retired man from Perth, formerly South Africa; a German fellow who lectures in Philosophy at the Jerusalem Uni attended part-time, as did an American fellow in Jerusalem to work on his Doctorate and of course Steve who is working towards the Permanent Diaconate and myself. We were welcomed by the founder of Bat Kol, Sr Maureen Fritz nds, Bro Elio Passeto nds and academic director Dr Marcie Lenk.

Breakfast at 7am and then we would begin at 8-8.30am with Siddur Prayer with Rabbi Dr Minna Bromberg PhD. Minna, who has the most angelic voice, led us in chanting beautiful prayers and psalms. We were each given a Siddur – basically a Jewish version of a missal. It contains liturgy for ordinary Sabbath and weekdays, not the High Holidays. It is in Hebrew, English and also a transliteration to help with the Hebrew pronunciation. It was a wonderful way to start the day.

8.30-10am was usually Hebrew, in which we were entertained by a very animated Sarah Israeli who is a senior instructor of Hebrew at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. This was followed by a short coffee break and then 10.30-12 noon various

lectures, e.g. “Introduction to Midrash”; “Philosophical and Mystical Interpretations of Numbers 7:89”; “What Moses Saw Num.12:6-8” and so on. Lunch at 12.30 and then we generally had a break till 4pm which gave us the opportunity to explore.

A ten minute walk away we could catch a free shuttle to the Old City, this saved a bit of huffing and puffing, however we did huff and puff on occasions. We visited the Western Wall and the gold Muslim Dome of the Rock. One afternoon Filipino Jeff and I did the underground City of David tour. Another time it was to explore the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. One day we took taxis to the Israel Museum to see a wonderful outdoor 50:1scale model of Jerusalem in Jesus’ time and the Shrine of the Book housing Dead Sea Scrolls (copies). One afternoon we were going to be free till supper at 6.30pm and so we three Aussies huffed and puffed to the Church of Dormition, where Les left Steve and I to continue. We visited the Upper Room (site of the Last Supper and Pentecost). the tomb of David, lots of nooks and crannies through the Jewish quarter and after leaving the Old City, we crossed the road to the ultra modern Notre Dame Complex, visiting their chapel and we happened upon an exhibition of the shroud on our way out of the complex.

Usually 4-5.30pm there was another lecture, e.g. ‘The Patriarch and the Priest: Why do Jewish Patriarchs Have Non-Jewish Mentors?’; ‘All in the ‘Numbers’ Parshat Bamidbar: A window into Jewish interpretation of Scripture’; ‘Apocalyptic Literature and Christology’; and so on.

Some nights after supper at 6.30pm we would have ‘Havruta’- traditional rabbinic approach to Talmud study where, over wine and cheese and olives, we would, in small ‘friendship’ groups of three or four, discuss a passage. I must admit by 8.30pm after such an exciting and active day I was almost asleep and beyond too much discussion. Many a night I had lights out before 9pm!

Continued p. 12.....

### EMMAUS COURSE

Thank you to the CSOE and your amazing Team who presented the Emmaus course recently.

I've certainly experienced so much knowledge of the Word of God, a deeper knowledge of the Old Testament prophets and was encouraged and strengthened by everyone's sharing of their personal testimonies of how God's amazing love and healing has transformed one's life. And the sharing of the ‘Pearls of Scripture’.

Filomena

## God's Presence in a Wandering People

Continued from p. 11 .....

Friday nights we would attend various Synagogues to welcome in Shabbat (the Hebrew for Sabbath), the most animated of which was at the 'First Station' a former railway station, transformed into a fabulous meeting place, lots of eateries, shops, a stage and sound system. This particular group could only be described as charismatic Jews, with lots of upbeat music and singing and dancing. Another Synagogue had men and women sitting together and that synagogue had a special send off for a group of young people about to start their compulsory military service as they had finished high school. We also visited a Synagogue where a curtain separated the men and women, but a woman led the singing first then a man continued. After the Synagogue we would return for our Shabbat service and meal back at the St Charles Hospice.

Saturdays we would huff and puff up to the Hebrew Union College for Shabbat worship. Very animated worship leader and every care was taken to help us follow the service – we were getting used to the Siddur by the end of it.

The second week we had an excursion to Galilee, travelling up the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee and then made our way down to the western side, staying two nights at Tiberias while we covered a vast area. It was much warmer than Jerusalem and so afternoon swims in the Sea of Galilee were a must to revive ourselves.

One Sunday, straight after breakfast, four of us took off with our Arab taxi driver Magid, to visit Bethlehem. Because he had the right coloured number plates we could zip in the back way and avoid the long delays when going the 'pilgrim bus' route. So we covered Shepherds' field, Milk Grotto church, Manger Square Church, the star marking Jesus birth spot, even the place where St Jerome worked translating the Scriptures into Latin... and we made it back in time for lunch!

One Shabbat we got a dispensation from attending the service and bright and early four of us headed off again with Magid, this time north into the West Bank town of Nablus to visit Jacob's Well and Joseph's tomb

all located up in the Samaritan area. Again, home for lunch.

Before we visited Yad Vashem holocaust museum we had a preparation lecture and then after we had returned and had lunch we had a debrief session. The most amazing section for me was the children's memorial candle, I recommend you look for it on YouTube.

I suspect you are wondering about Mass. The first morning Steve and I attended Mass with the nuns at St Charles and the only thing we understood was 'Alleluia' and 'Amen' as it was all in German. Thank God for the Universalis program on my tablet, it enabled Steve and I to follow. Most other days the Brazilian priest celebrated Mass for us late afternoon in our little chapel near our sleeping quarters.

I have just tried to give you a taste. I am very grateful to have been enabled to experience Bat Kol. Thank God, He restored my fitness to be able to fully participate, even if I did often take my trusty fold-up walking stick. I also want to express my gratitude to those who responded to the Director's invitation to assist me financially, through your generosity my air fare and travel insurance was covered and I was able to treat a couple of the religious to some of the excursions. God bless your generosity. Shalom !

Graduation!

By Sandra Bishop

Further information on Bat Kol, visit:  
<https://batkol.info/>



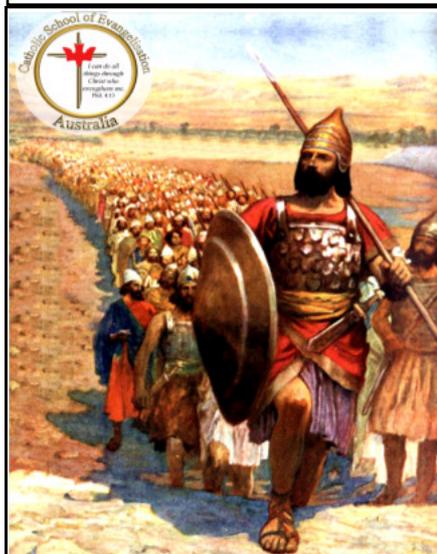
## CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2019

1 <sup>st</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> August, 5 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup> Sept.	'Philip – New Life'	The Way Prayer Group, Greensborough North	Rose 0411 650 339
24 <sup>th</sup> —25 <sup>th</sup> August	'Joshua'	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA	Carmen Sylvester 0419 144 872 or (08) 8339 2573
11 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup> Sept. 9 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> October 20 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	'Philip – New Life'	Mary MacKillop Church Keilor Downs	Christina 0431 955 975
2 <sup>nd</sup> —5 <sup>th</sup> November	'Moses'	St Clare's Hall Box Hill North	<a href="https://www.trybooking.com/BCEEY">https://www.trybooking.com/BCEEY</a> or Rose 0411 650 339

### 2019 Extra Activity Program for S.A.

Event	Date	Venue & Time
Healing Weekend	28 <sup>th</sup> September	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich 10.00 am to 3.00p.m
Faith on Fire Seminar	19 <sup>th</sup> October	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich 10.00am to 3.00p.m
Celebrate Emmanuel	24 <sup>th</sup> November	Tea-Tree Plaza, Modbury 12pm—3pm

Contact details: Carmen (08) 8339 2573 or 0419 144 872



## GIDEON'S ARMY

A big THANK YOU to the generous people who have made a financial commitment to assist the ongoing running of the CSOE. Without you we would not be able to continue our mission which is our response to the last 4 Popes' call for a New Evangelisation.

**To make arrangements for direct debit or to forward payments please contact:**

Beata Dawidowska-Gajda, CSOE Treasurer  
7 Edgewater Place, BURTON SA 5110  
ph: 08 8280 3804

NB change of email address: [beatagajda@internode.on.net](mailto:beatagajda@internode.on.net)

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