



Dear friends

There is no shortage of great role models in our faith, and many of them have their feast days in September. We have the Korean martyrs, Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Hasang and their companions (20 Sept) and the Filipino martyr Lawrence Ruiz (28 Sept) and well known and admired saints such as Matthew the Evangelist (21 Sept) and St Vincent de Paul (27 Sept).

While we may not be persecuted for our faith, we may experience difficulty in living out our Christian values, which may not be consonant with the values of the world. Perhaps our courses on Prayer & Spirituality and Women in Christian History may help. Or perhaps being a part of a Small Christian Community will make all the difference to your faith. Read Daphne's moving account below of what her SCC means to her, with all its strengths and imperfections.

Retirement and aging have been much in the news lately. Palliative care and caring for the care giver will be some of the issues discussed in our Palliative Care and Caring for the Terminally Ill workshop. Read on for more details.

*In Christ,*

*Susanna Huang*

**To Be or Not To Be ... part of a Small Christian Community**

*by Daphne Leong, Pastoral Coordinator*

There is a push by the Holy Spirit, I believe, towards building Small Christian Communities all over the world. Here in Singapore, we see an interest in building these communities more and more. As I move around different parishes, I hear different comments regarding forming such communities. There is a general longing among the people to want to be in groups because we are profoundly social beings. Yet, there is a contradictory value of individualism from today's society. As a modern person in an urban society, the idea of living in community used to be such a remote thought to me, until I moved into my current neighbourhood and met my Catholic neighbours some ten years ago. Initially, we started out coming together to do gospel sharing and gathering together for social and recreational activities. Over the years, we have grown to become one big extended family. We would share our life stories with one another, we worship together, we share each other's anxieties and we celebrate together. Eventually, we learnt to witness our faith to others too, by visiting sick neighbours, helping needy families in the area, welcoming new families in the area.

As I looked back, having this community experience has enriched my life tremendously. This is not just a superficial gathering of people for a social purpose but a family of God's children. In any family, there will be conflict or disagreement, but no matter what, family members stick it out with one another.

People can choose not to have the relationship because it is hard to get along with people who are not like-minded or people whom you dislike. Yet, Jesus calls us to 'love your neighbour'. This is exactly what I have experienced. When we choose to put aside our differences and our idiosyncrasies, and remain together to pray and to live as a community witnessing to our faith, the commandment to love my neighbours becomes real and tangible. The challenge to remain as a group to love and serve helped me to understand Jesus' challenge to love. As a result of this experience, I have come to appreciate God's compassionate love for all human kind. We can sometimes be a real pain to others, yet God loves us all the same. So, I too, need to love others as God has loved and accepted me if I want to follow Christ.

So the choice to be or not to be in a community is for each person to make. As for me, I have experienced and learnt dimensions of my faith which otherwise would have remained as 'book knowledge' for me.

**What's happening in SEPT?**

**Palliative Care and Care for the Terminally Ill – Dr Rilly Ray and Councillors from Clinical Pastoral Education**



Saturday, 8 September  
2 to 6 pm  
SPI, 2 Highland Road  
\$30 per person

**Women in Christian History – Sister Susan Thomas, F.M.M.**

Outlining the lives of women from the early church like Saints Perpetua & Felicity to contemporary women like Jean Donovan, Sisters Ita Ford, Dorothy Kazel and Maura Clark, Sister Susan will show us their extraordinary courage and how they continue to inspire us today.

5 Thursdays, 13, 20, 27 Sept, 4 & 11 Oct  
9.30 – 11.30 am  
SPI, 2 Highland Road  
Voluntary contribution

**Prayer & Spirituality**

– Sister Maria Lau, I.J.

Explore praying with Scripture, let prayer become your way of life.

4 Wednesdays, 12, 19, 26 Sept & 3 Oct  
9.30 – 11.00am  
Risen Christ Church  
Voluntary contribution.

**Leviticus and the Book of Numbers**

– Fr Ambrose Vaz

8 Tuesdays, from 2 Oct  
9.30 to 11.30 am or 7.45 to 9.45 pm  
\$25 per person



Take Charge

# Events in August ...

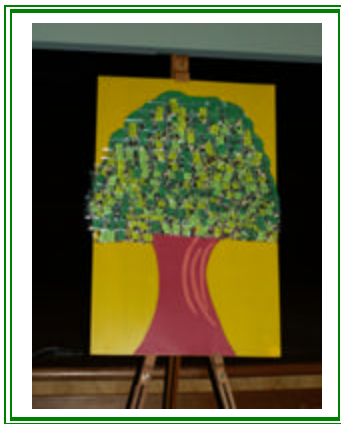
We were breathless running our workshops and talks in July & August. Here are some photos taken from Kingdom & Community lectures by Fr John Fuellenbach, the Nourish & Celebrate talks by Fr Edward Matthews in July/Aug and the Catechists' Seminar at the newly opened Performing Arts Centre at Catholic Junior College on 4 August, with Frs John Fuellenbach and Edward Matthews and the Day of Prayer with Brother Ghislain of Taize on 25 August.



○ Fr John Fuellenbach, SVD proclaiming Good News with joy



○ Fr Edward Matthews, Liturgist giving us the spirit of the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy



○ "The Kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed..."



○ Icons are very much a part of "Taize style" prayer



○ Catechist Seminar @ CJC

○ Brother Ghislain of Taize leading the participants in the chanting – "Singing "Taize style" can be likened to *lectio divina*."



# Small Christian Communities (SCCs) - salt & light in the neighbourhood

*Coming soon ...*

*13 Oct Archdiocese SCC Day*

The Integrated Pastoral Approach Team has been busy providing different types of training for different needs and requirements of the Small Christian Communities in parishes & at the archdiocesan level.

Some parishes, like St Mary of the Angels, are starting to build SCCs, while others, like Risen Christ, are creating awareness and visiting homes in the parish to build a few more communities. St Bernadette's parish had SCCs and they want to know how they can move these SCCs on and form more SCCs. In Immaculate Heart of Mary parish a few communities are keen to deepen their skills to strengthen SCCs for example in gospel sharing. 100 of them turned up for a full day Gospel Sharing workshop on 25<sup>th</sup> August.

More Catholics today realize that the way to be truly Christ like is to be in a community with other believers, living in faith, in love and service to others. This realization has contributed to greater interest and awareness of the Small Christian Communities.

The IPA team celebrated community day on 26<sup>th</sup> August at the parish of St Michael with the SCCs. There seems to be a gathering interest and understanding of the importance of becoming a church that is a "Communion of Communities" more conscious of the mission entrusted to all of us by Christ.

All these events will culminate with an "Archdiocesan SCCs Day" on Saturday 13 October at Singapore Pastoral Institute in 2 Highland Road where we will gather all SCCs from the archdiocese and celebrate together! We have lined up a real treat for all those attending with world renowned speakers and great fellowship!

