



THE IGNATIAN

JAN-MAR 2024 ISSUE 2024/1

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SPIRITUALITY

A New Phase

Dear friends and supporters of Kingsmead Centre (KC),

I wish you a blessed and a grace-filled 2024. As we enter the new year, KC is also beginning a new phase. As of 1 January 2024, Fr. Charles Sim, S.J. has been given the leadership of counselling services, and spirituality services at KC has been placed under my care. We believe that reorganization in this manner will enable KC to better serve the needs of the faithful in the parish of St. Ignatius, in our archdiocese and beyond.

I take this opportunity to offer our heartfelt thanks to Ms Celina Lin, who has led KC as director for the last three years. Celina has done a remarkable job in leading staff and volunteers through the difficult "pandemic years". Although she has now stepped down from a leadership position, Celina remains a cherished member of the spirituality team at KC.

As the "Head of Spirituality" at KC, I also seek your understanding and support. I feel like a "fish out of water" in my new role, and therefore, I ask for your pardon and patience, for the mistakes that I will undoubtedly make along the way. And recognizing that this important ministry entrusted to me and the KC spirituality team, has been painstakingly developed over the years with the kind assistance of our lay collaborators and benefactors, I ask for your ongoing support and generosity. It is only with your help that we can continue our mission of promoting Ignatian Spirituality and caring for the spiritual needs of the people.

Thank you and God bless.



Yours in Christ,

Fr. Jerome Leon, S.J.

Head of Spirituality, Kingsmead Centre

CONTENTS

Message from Head of Counselling: Fr. Charles Sim, S.J. > page 2

Ignatian Contemplation: Imaginative Prayer > page 3

Homily: Covenantal Relationship > page 4

Upcoming Recollection and Retreats > page 7

CONTACT US

Kingsmead Centre
8 Victoria Park Road
Singapore 266492

Email:
kc-info@mas-jesuits.org

Contact number:
(65) 6467 6072

Website: <https://kingsmeadcentre.sg>

Opening hours:
Mon - Sat: 9.30am - 5.30pm
Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays

St Francis Xavier Adoration Chapel
Kingsmead Centre Level 1
Opening hours:
Mon - Sat: 10am - 5pm

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF COUNSELLING

New Year Message for Kingsmead Centre



FOLLOW US ON
FACEBOOK

Kingsmead Centre

As we journey into the New Year 2024, Kingsmead Counselling (KC) hopes to provide the ideal place for your psychospiritual education and training, besides enhancing our counselling services to better meet the needs of our clients, parishioners, and friends.

The focus for this year is to create a greater appreciation of the psychospiritual connectedness in who we are, and what we intend to be as "Friends-in-the-Lord". We will continue with our series of "MAGIS" talks directed at the developmental and spiritual needs of our participants, including a "Psychospiritual Counselling" Symposium

to promote the integration of psychology and spirituality among our counsellors in Singapore, and around the region.

Hence, we look forward to your active participation and involvement, and invite you to be a part of our KC community, sharing with us your God given abilities, talents and gifts in this coming year.

Here's wishing you and your family a Happy and Blessed New Year 2024!



Take care and God bless!

Fr. Charles Sim, S.J.

Head of Counselling,
Kingsmead Centre

UPCOMING TALK @ KINGSMEAD CENTRE

27

APRIL

SATURDAY

TRANSCENDING PHYSICAL & MENTAL DECLINE IN SENIORS WITH CHRISTIAN SPIRITUALITY

Speaker: Dr. Philip Yap

Specialist in geriatric and palliative medicine

Time: 9.30am -11.30am Cost: Love offering

The conventional narrative of successful ageing is premised on appraising seniors on midlife standards of autonomy, wealth and good health, reinforcing the notion of measuring seniors' worth by their attributes, possessions and instrumental value. However, ageing can bring about a decline in physical, cognitive and emotional health. Adapting to these changes can prove challenging and may result in mental and emotional distress and disenchantment. **How then can seniors age well in the face of loss and decline?** This session will provide an understanding of how physical and mental frailty can accompany ageing and what helps to maintain a good quality of life. **It proposes that the Christian perspective to ageing, suffering and ultimately mortality can help engender wisdom and give ailing seniors fresh hope and a reason to live.**



Info & registration:
bit.ly/MHS24April

| Excerpt from 'The Ignatian Adventure' by Kevin O'Brien, SJ.

Ignatian Contemplation: Imaginative Prayer

Ignatius was convinced that God can speak to us as surely through our imagination as through our thoughts and memories. In the Ignatian tradition, praying with the imagination is called contemplation. In the Exercises, contemplation is a very active way of praying that engages the mind and heart and stirs up thoughts and emotions. (Note that in other spiritual traditions, *contemplation* has quite a different meaning: it refers to a way of praying that frees the mind of all thoughts and images.)

Ignatian contemplation is suited especially for the Gospels. In the Second Week of the Exercises, we accompany Jesus through his life by imagining scenes from the Gospel stories. Let the events of Jesus' life be present to you right now. Visualize the event as if you were making a movie. Pay attention to the details: sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and feelings of the event. Lose yourself in the story; don't worry if your imagination is running too wild. At some point, place yourself in the scene.

Contemplating a Gospel scene is not simply remembering it or going back in time. Through the act of contemplation, the Holy Spirit makes present a mystery of Jesus' life in a way that is meaningful for you now. Use your imagination to dig deeper into the story



so that God may communicate with you in a personal, evocative way.

We might initially worry about going beyond the text of the Gospel. If you have offered your time of prayer to God, then begin by trusting that God is communicating with you. If you wonder if your imagination is going "too far," then do some discernment with how you are praying. Where did your imagining lead you: Closer to God or farther away? Is your imagining bringing you **consolation** or desolation?

Some people find imaginative prayer difficult. They may not be able to picture the scene easily, yet they may have some intuition or gut reaction to the story. Or they may hear or feel the story more than visualize it. In a spirit of generosity, pray as you are able; don't try to force it. Rest assured that God will speak to you, whether through your memory, understanding, intellect, emotions, or imagination.

Source: www.ignatianspirituality.com

| Homily 18 February 2024: 1st Sunday of Lent Fr. Charles Sim, S.J.

Covenantal Relationship

Among the ancient religions of the world, there is a common story or legend about a "Great Flood" that destroyed the world. Those human beings who emerged after that great flood around 13,000 years ago were first known as the "hunter-gatherers" by the archaeologists. However, if some of you had watched the recent Netflix series, *Ancient Apocalypse*, the narrator and researcher, Graham Hancock proposed a radical theory, with rather convincing arguments that a technologically advanced ancient human civilization was active even before or during the last Ice Age, more than 13,000 years ago. These people had provided know-how for agriculture, building and even cosmology to the early ancient civilizations, like the Mesopotamians, Egyptians, and Mayans after the last Ice Age period. Something that goes against the present archaeological paradigm and well established history of civilizations, e.g., the cradle of civilization in Mesopotamia, present day Iran and Iraq.

You may be wondering what all these have to do with today's readings and especially, at the beginning of our Season of Lent. The First Reading tells us that after the Great Flood in the Book of Genesis, God made a "Covenant" or agreement with Noah and his sons, or the human race that there would not be another



great flood to destroy the human race. The sign of this Covenant is the "Rainbow" that we see after the rain. According to the Letter of St. Peter in the Second Reading, the waters of baptism and the resurrection of Christ Jesus, are God's continual covenantal relationship with the human race. This Covenant is a promise of eternal life to all who believe in the life, passion, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, or better known as the Christ events.

The origin of our Catholic faith, like the melting of the ice in the last Ice Age because of warmer climate, which enabled plants, animals and even human beings to survive, came about through another significant Covenant, made possible through Mary's "fiat" or "yes" to be the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, some 2000 years ago in a tiny and unknown home town of Nazareth.

Continued from previous page

| Homily 18 February 2024: 1st Sunday of Lent



We know from the Gospel of Mark today that the public life and ministries of Jesus of Nazareth began with the waters of baptism at the River Jordan, before entering into the desert for 40 days and nights, all in preparation for his God-given mission to be the Messiah and Saviour of humanity.

The Gospel of Mark tells us very briefly that *“The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.”* A very short narrative of Jesus’ 40 days of retreat in the wilderness. You may ask, *“for what purpose, and why did the Spirit come down on him during Jesus’ baptism and drive him out into the wilderness?”* This is a one and same question, which is best understood within the covenantal relationship between God and humanity, or all of us.

What is this Covenant, this agreement between God and us? I believe the answer lies written in the Book of Deuteronomy 7:6, that Yahweh God will be our God and we are to be God’s chosen people. A God that is not only meant for the Jewish people, but for all humanity, for all of us who profess our faith in the Risen Lord through the waters of baptism and confirmation. And more importantly, this

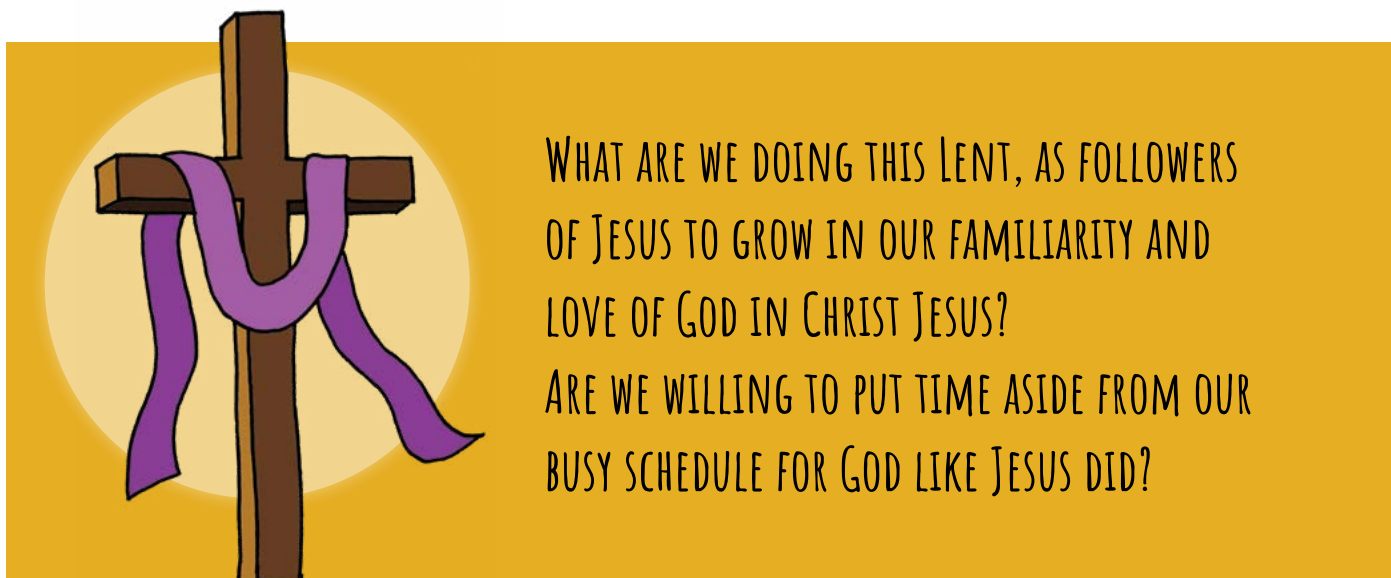
covenantal relationship should manifest itself not only through words but loving actions, as the Spirit that drove Jesus of Nazareth in the wilderness.

The Spirit of God who guided Jesus into the wilderness, made it possible for the voice of God to speak in person with Jesus of Nazareth. And in that wilderness Jesus listened carefully, prayed and contemplated on what he had received in his conversation with God, all for the purpose of his life’s mission on earth. Thus, like Jesus, all of us need to learn how to listen to this voice of God in our lives. But we often find ourselves unable to do so, especially in the busyness of our daily life, work or activities. Therefore, we need to take time off or rather set time aside to listen to the voice, or the promptings of what God wants from us, as well as what God wants to give us in our daily lives. Just as Jesus of Nazareth took time out before beginning his important life mission, i.e. to show us who God truly is, a personal, loving and compassionate God, a God of mercy and love. Jesus, like us, needed also to grow in love and familiarity with God the Father during his life on earth, as we do in our faith journey here.

To be continued in next page

Continued from previous page

| Homily 18 February 2024: 1st Sunday of Lent



WHAT ARE WE DOING THIS LENT, AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS TO GROW IN OUR FAMILIARITY AND LOVE OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS?

ARE WE WILLING TO PUT TIME ASIDE FROM OUR BUSY SCHEDULE FOR GOD LIKE JESUS DID?

Jesus took 40 days to make the needed preparation, and he continued to do that throughout his apostolic life, rising early in the morning or late at night to pray and listen to God his Father to guide him in his mission. *What are we doing this Lent, as followers of Jesus to grow in our familiarity and love of God in Christ Jesus? Are we willing to put time aside from our busy schedule for God like Jesus did?* Will you spend a few days in silent retreat, to listen and be loved by God, as Jesus did in the wilderness, where the angels looked after and cared for him despite great temptations?

As we enter this Season of Lent, may I on behalf of our Lord, invite you to spend some quiet time, or days with the Lord, in quiet prayer, meditation or contemplation of the Gospel, so as to know the Lord in a more intimate way, especially through the guided Ignatian retreat or recollection here at Kingsmead Center, or elsewhere in other retreat centers in the region. You might

consider Seven Fountains in Chiangmai, or closer to Singapore, Maranatha at the foothills of Genting, Malaysia. The hope here is to have a "fresh" beginning for our faith, or to renew our personal Covenant with God in our faith journey.

Kindly allow me to end my homily with a short quotation and a prayer on Covenantal Relationship, by Pope Benedict XVI, and Pope Francis, respectively.

"Creation exists to be a place for the covenant that God wants to make with man. The goal of creation is the covenant, the love story of God and man," wrote Pope Benedict.

And the prayer of Pope Francis goes like this, *"Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with you. I need you. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into your redeeming embrace."*

God bless!

Fr. Charles Sim, S.J.

| **MARCH CALENDAR**

Upcoming recollection and retreats on Spirituality at Kingsmead Centre

10
MARCH
SUNDAY

EXCUSE ME, I AM STILL ALIVE
(There's a lot more to healing)

A Lenten Day of Recollection with Confessions and Mass

Facilitator: Fr. Leslie Raj, S.J. & Fr. Francis Lim, S.J.

Cost: \$30 (includes lunch)

Time: 10.00am - 5.00pm

Info & registration: bit.ly/kc_lent2



16 - 17
MARCH
SAT & SUN

PRAYER 101 - LENT EDITION
An introduction to Silence and Prayer

Facilitator: Fr. Jerome Leon, S.J.

Cost: \$80

Time: 10.00am (16 Mar) - 1.00pm (17 Mar)

Info & registration: bit.ly/prayer101_lent2024



28 - 31
MARCH
THU - SUN

MOTHER OF THE SAVIOUR:
St. Ignatius & Mother Mary
An Easter Triduum Retreat

Facilitator: Fr. Francis Lim, S.J.

Cost: \$250 (includes meals)

Time: 6.30pm (28 Mar) - 1.00pm (31 Mar)

Info & registration:

bit.ly/easterretreat2024

