

## 羊牧之聲

## 結束與開始

梁熾才

執筆寫六月期的「羊牧之聲」時，正是在復活期最後兩個主日的中間。剛結束了耶穌升天節，並等待聖神降臨節的來臨。耶穌升天可說是耶穌在世生活和使命的光榮結束，而聖神降臨是祂的教會在世生活和使命的開始。

耶穌升天去了，並不是遠離我們世人。祂是帶著我們的人性(靈魂和肉身)升天的，祂會繼續帶領我們到達祂同一的居處，分享祂光榮復活升天的恩寵。對於天主在基督內賜給我們這偉大和寶貴的救恩，我們當稱揚不盡，感謝不息。

耶穌這樣完美地完成天父給祂救贖人類的使命，天父將天上地下的一切權柄都交給了祂，叫復活升天的耶穌坐在自己的右邊，「超乎一切率領者、掌權者、異能者、宰制者，以及一切現世及來世，可稱呼的名號之上。」(弗1:21)在世上，如果我們能接近有權勢的人，得到他們的青睞，我們定必暢行無阻，做起事來，得心應手。若我們在天上有一位擁有無上權力的中保和救主，而祂又絕不會濫用祂的權力，我們又何需恐懼？這位中保和救主是如此的接近我們，「看！我同你們天天在一起，直到今世的終結」(瑪28:20)，如聖保祿宗徒所說，「靠著那愛我們的主，我們在這一切事上，大獲全勝。」(羅8:37)

耶穌被接升天，接著就是聖神降臨，開始教會作證的時期。為基督作證，證實祂是天主在聖經內所預言的默西亞、救世主，我們很需要聖神的智慧和德能。況且，基督在升天時，派遣宗徒，去使萬民成為門徒；為了延續基督給予教會救世贖世的使命，我們更需要聖神的幫助。今天，我們面對新型肺炎流行的情勢，和港版國安法的政治現實，我們很需要聖神的啟迪和能力，來超越種種怕情，辨識時代的徵兆和機會，在基督內度平安的生活。



## 重開彌撒

自今年2月15日，香港教區為抗疫而暫停主日彌撒，到6月7日重開主日彌撒，已經歷了三個月和三星期。衷心祝禱，這段悠長的時間，使我們愈形增加參與彌撒和領受聖事的渴望。讓我們企盼在重開彌撒時，以經歷了疫症威脅後更深刻的喜樂，來慶祝基督戰勝罪惡和死亡，並帶給我們新的生命。讓我們重新參與彌撒，和逐步參與堂區生活，來表達新的開始。偕同基督，在聖神內，擺脫疫症和死亡的陰霾，不再返回我們舊有的生活方式，但以新的自由——天主子女的自由和無所恐懼來生活。

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聖安多尼堂



堂區通訊

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地址：香港薄扶林道69A

電話：25466221

傳真：25480661

網址：<http://www.anthonychurch.org>E-mail：[editorial@anthonychurch.org](mailto:editorial@anthonychurch.org)





## 二零二零年五月份牧民議會 議決事項

1. 按教區牧民指引，跟進安排適切的防疫措施和相關服務，以妥善準備恢復公開彌撒。隨後，決定舉行「候洗者甄選禮暨考核禮」和「入門聖事」的細節。
2. 配合在聖心月恢復彌撒，本堂款待小組籌劃由牧民議會成員及善會代表，於6月7日及14日，兩周的各台主日彌撒前，歡迎教友重回堂區參與感恩祭，並送贈具特別意義的小禮物，慶祝「在主的愛內疫境重生！」。請閱覽第3頁的資訊。
3. 於6月13日及14日慶祝堂區主保聖安多尼瞻禮，安排派送聖安多尼麵包。暫時延後堂慶聚餐。
4. 傳信、禮儀、互愛委員會和培育組，繼續計劃具帶動性的活動，準備教友重新投入堂區生活。
5. 堂區專項事務小組跟進方案建議：(a)開闢青年人聚集或活動空間，改動聯誼廳，配合未來青年發展工作之用；(b)環境維護小組協助整理聖母岩，以美化花束和蠟燭的擺設。

## 二零二零年六月份動態 堂區禮儀活動

1st (周一)	恢復平日彌撒 上午七時十五分 【註：往後取消上午七時十分及七時四十五分彌撒】 下午六時	7th (周日)	恢復主日彌撒 天主聖三節	17th (周三)	三三追思亡者 下午六時
		13th (周六)	聖安多尼瞻禮 主保瞻禮彌撒 晚上八時	19th (周五)	耶穌聖心節 晚上八時彌撒 (下午六時取消)
5th (周五)	首瞻禮六 恭敬耶穌聖心 晚上八時 (下午六時彌撒取消)	14th (周日)	基督聖體聖血節 慶祝聖安多尼瞻禮	21st (周日)	常年期第十二主日
				28th (周日)	常年期第十三主日
敬禮聖安多尼 逢周二 晚上六時彌撒			明供聖體 逢周四 晚上七時		
誦唸「向聖若望鮑思高禱文」 每月最後一天的各台彌撒後		「習練善終」祈禱 每月逢首周一的各台彌撒後		「進教之佑聖母降福」經文 每月廿四日的各台彌撒結束前	

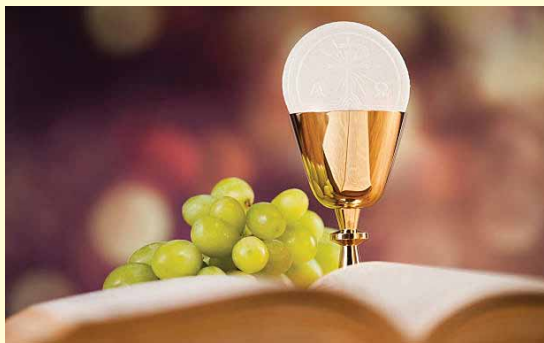


### 鳴謝捐贈《羊牧之聲》

願聖母進教之佑及聖安多尼酬謝你們，  
賜你們身心健康，家庭和睦，主寵日隆。

葉衛熾瑞	\$1000	鄭雅蓮	\$100
潘宅	\$200	精叻馬	\$200
聖安多尼之友會	\$300	男聖體會	\$200
曾潔玲	\$100	太極福傳會	\$500

## 教友參與堂區彌撒



- 6月1日恢復平日彌撒，往後早上只有7:15am一台彌撒，下午彌撒時間照常。特別慶節彌撒安排將另行通告。
- 6月7日恢復主日彌撒，各台彌撒時間與以往相同。
- 6月份禮儀活動刊於本通訊第2頁。

在目前「新冠肺炎」疫情尚未全面受控制的階段，湯漢樞機酌情批准以下**替代參與主日彌撒的方式**：

- 如信友掛慮外出參與彌撒可能會感染疫症，可採用參加網上主日彌撒（及神領聖體）或閱讀聖經等方式；
- 由於目前堂區聖堂可容納的人數受規限，信友可以參加一台平日彌撒，替代主日彌撒。  
【註：以上兩項酌情批准，將於適當時予以取消，並將公布。】
- 信友如身體不適，或家中有接受「家居隔離」的人士同住，主日應留在家中，參加網上彌撒或履行其他善工。

## 我們齊來赴聖宴 歡暢聚會於主前

堂區歡迎教友重新參與彌撒，特別製作一份具信仰意義的小禮物——祈禱咭及一瓶聖水，送贈給各位兄弟姊妹或教友家庭。我們感恩「在主的愛內疫境重生」！祈禱文如下：



「慈悲的耶穌，在聖心月的開始——我們恢復公開彌撒的時刻，我們懷著經歷在疫症陰影下而得以重生的喜樂，歡欣地參與感恩聖祭，慶祝祢戰勝罪惡和死亡，並藉著血和水帶給我們新的生命。主，感謝祢對我們的愛，並懇求祢接納我們常存在祢的愛內。亞孟。」

慈悲的耶穌，求祢用這水降福我們的居所，使我們的家庭充滿祢的愛，並使我們能全心愛祢和愛人如己。我們將全家奉獻於祢的聖心，懇求祢做我們的家主，保護我們，並帶領我們到達天國，永遠感謝祢的聖愛。亞孟。」

## 主日學招生

堂區將於9月開辦新學年的主日學。K1至K3的兒童，請報讀「主日學星期日上午班」。小一至小六的學生，請報讀「主日學星期六下午班」。名額有限，報名從速。



## 繼續支持「天主教四旬期運動」Support Catholic Lenten Campaign



## 愛德捐獻 Love Offerings







黃盛偉

耶穌用自己的生命替我們罪人贖罪，然後以復活引証了聖經上所講的必會實現，並讓世人見證了這個復活的奧蹟，使我們更加相信天主，不再有懷疑和惶恐。我會透過祈禱、閱讀聖經及遵守誡命，將自己交托給天主。



鄧慧笙

路加福音24章46節說：「經上曾這樣記載，默西亞必須受苦，第三天要從死者中復活，……」耶穌的復活證明經書上所記載定必應驗。我們應當聽從天主聖言的教誨。我要經常祈禱，學習聖經，愛近人如愛自己一樣，堅定信德，時常反省，願主的平安常在心中。



鍾溢邦

耶穌的復活見證了神的全能。只有創造生命的神才能令人死而復生，提醒了基督徒看待生命和死亡的不同。我會常常祈禱，向天主承認自己是罪人，並願意相信耶穌，接受耶穌為生命的救主。



鄭玉梅

主耶穌基督愛我們，時常把平安賞賜給我們。有主臨在，內心就會感到平安，不再憂慮。耶穌復活是整個救恩史中一個重要的部份，因為「經上曾這樣記載：默西亞必須受苦，第三天要從死者中復活」（路24:46）。耶穌的復活引証了天父的全能，祂以聖死赦免人類的罪過。雖然現在我們仍會犯罪，但天父從不離開我們，只等待我們回應祂的召叫。我會常反省自己，求主寬恕我的罪過，求聖神帶領我，增加我的信德。每天祈禱，多親近天父。常常提醒自己要遠離罪惡，盡力遵守誡命和聖教會五規等。多閱讀福音，隨天父的旨意而行，成為一個有信德的基督徒。



陳頌天

耶穌向門徒說：「你們為什麼恐懼？為什麼心裡起了疑慮？」（路24:38）這也正是指出我們經常不夠信德，心存疑慮。我們要堅固自己的信德。耶穌死而復活，深化世人及宗徒們的信德，相信天父及耶穌所施行的奇蹟。我要多祈禱，把重擔交托給天父，讓主帶領。我盼望領洗後能參加感恩祭，透過聖言、聖事和神父的講道，獲享內心平安。



馮詠基

耶穌受苦難、死亡、復活，為我們贖罪，使我們得救，使我們的生命有着希望。我要堅持信仰，加強信德，放下有罪的我，由重生而交托給耶穌。主已把所有事情安排好，只要在教會內，按耶穌的教導而生活，就可以得救了。



李嘉煒

路加福音24章36節說：他們正談論這些事的時候，耶穌立在他們中間，向他們說：「願你們平安！」耶穌的復活為我有很大的意義，耶穌為救贖世人的罪，死後復活並且向人顯現奇蹟，是強而有力的證據。復活的主讓門徒從懷疑提升到堅信，由懼怕轉為平安，而心中平安是來自信靠主。我會用行動去準備領洗，會經常祈禱，相信天父與我們常在，時刻自我反省，參加彌撒，熱心投入禮儀生活，深化信仰。



廖君翹

路加福音第24章21節說：「我們原指望他（耶穌）就是那要拯救以色列的。可是，這些事發生到今天，已經是第三天。……」耶穌受難前，已經告訴門徒他將死後三天復活，但是他們沒有信心。人性的軟弱，使人未能看清楚救恩，反而懷疑天主的大能，因而未能接受天主的恩寵。以色列滅亡後約二千年，於1948年復國了，可見天主一直沒有離棄以色列人。同時，耶穌的聖死救贖了世上一切的罪人。這份愛，穿越了地域，跨越了時空，直到永遠。耶穌命令信眾要以他的名向萬邦宣講悔改，以得罪之赦免。（路24:47）我們即將受洗，要準備在行為和信德方面，作好信徒的榜樣，愛主愛人，傳揚主名。



# 我們可以向天主 懇求一切



「讓我們試著在天主慈愛的懷抱裡祈禱。」教宗方濟各5月13日在周三公開接見要理講授中如此表示。當天的省思圍繞著基督徒祈禱的特色，即：祈禱源自於天主的啟示，那與我們建立關係的「祢」。

## 對主的渴慕之情

天主，祢是我的天主，我急切尋覓祢；我的靈魂渴慕祢，我的肉身切望祢，我有如一塊乾旱涸竭的無水田地。昔日我曾在聖殿裏瞻仰過祢，為看到祢的威能，和祢的光輝；因祢的慈愛比命更寶貴，我的唇舌要時常稱頌祢。我要一生一世讚美祢，我要因祢名把手舉起！我的靈魂緊緊追隨祢，祢的右手常常扶持我。(詠63:2-5, 9)

教宗方濟各深入探討祈禱是什麼。首先，教宗闡明，祈禱的行為「屬於每一個人、每個宗教信仰的信徒，或許也屬於那些沒有任何信仰的人」。它「發自我們內的隱密處」、源自我們的心靈，涵蓋了我們的各種能力、情緒、知識和身體。因此，倘若一個人的心靈在祈禱，那麼「他整个人都在祈禱」。

教宗說：「祈禱是個動力、是個呼求，超越我們自身：它源自我們的內在，並向外延伸，因為它感到思念著相遇。我們必須強調這點：它感到思念著相遇，那份思念勝過於需求；它是一條道路，是對相遇的思念。祈禱是一聲『我』，摸索尋求著『祢』。『我』與『祢』的相遇不可計量。」

基督徒的祈禱源自於天主的啟示：「祢」不再神秘隱身，卻與我們建立關係。教宗表示，基督徒不斷地慶祝天主的「彰顯」。天主不再隱藏自己，而是啟示自身，一如祂在東方三賢士前彰顯自己，在約旦河受洗，在加納婚宴上變水為酒。聖子耶穌啟示了天父，祈禱便是與慈眉善目的天主建立關係。

教宗強調，「這是基督徒祈禱的首要特色。如果以前的

人總是習慣在親近天主時有點畏縮，在接近這個迷人又驚人的奧秘時帶些驚恐，在敬拜天主時卑躬屈膝，如同奴僕不願對主人失敬一般，那麼，基督徒反而懷著信任之情，大膽地稱天主為『父親』」。



在基督信仰中，「奴隸」這樣的詞彙不復存在，取而代之的是「盟約、友誼、許諾、共融和親近」。耶穌對眾門徒說：「我不再稱你們為僕人，而是朋友。」「你們因我的名無論向父求什麼，祂必賜給你們」(參閱：若15:15-16)這像是一張空白支票，我們可以放膽一試。

天主是朋友、是盟友、是新郎。在祈禱中，我們能與祂建立信任關係，而且在《天主經》裡，耶穌教導我們向祂提出種種請求。教宗指出，「我們可以向天主懇求一切、解釋一切、講述一切。即使在與天主的關係中我們感覺有所缺失，天主仍然愛著我們」。天主始終親近我們，在我們的心門外等著我們給祂開門。天主有時會敲門，但祂很有耐心，充滿關愛，從不強迫，宛如慈父慈母。為此，教宗鼓勵眾人「在天主慈愛的懷抱裡祈禱」。

(資料：梵蒂岡新聞網)





# 六月生活靈修

## 生活反省

聖言成了血肉，寄居在我們中間。主耶穌建立了聖體聖事，我們這些吃了他的肉，喝了他的血的人，是否意識到，祂切切實實的居住在我們內呢？在生活的大小事情上，我們有沒有聆聽祂的聲音，尋求祂的旨意呢？

我們注意衛生，講究營養，選擇新鮮食材，留意食物標籤、農藥激素等，因為我們明白 "You are what you eat." 這個說法。既然主耶穌是我們生活的食糧，我們在生活中那一方面反映出祂的面貌呢？我們有沒有因祂而改變自己？或者因祂去多做一些愛德工作呢？

也聽說過 "You are what you read."。香港人重視教育，學生自幼便努力讀書；為了與時並進。上班一族，甚至退休人士也明白要進修，要終身學習。作為基督徒，我們也應該自我增值，勤讀聖經，好讓聖言滋潤我們的心靈，指引我們的腳步，陶塑我們的生命。



## 祈禱

全能仁慈的天父，疫情以來，我們好幾個月未能在彌撒中領受聖體了，以前視為理所當然的事，現在顯得份外珍貴。在這艱難困惑的時候，求祢多加引導和助佑我們，特別是弱小的一群。深信有祢的助佑，我們總會走出幽谷；深信是祢的旨意，壞事可以變成好事。亞孟。

(資料：堂區培育組)

(continued from P.8)

## “The Prayer of the Christian” (Psalm 63:2-5,9)



did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, He may give it to you" (John 15:15-16). But this is a blank check: "All that you ask the Father in my name, I'll give you everything"!

God is the friend, the ally, the spouse. One can establish in prayer a relationship of confidence with Him, so true is this that in the "Our Father" Jesus has taught us to address a series of questions to Him. We can ask God for everything, everything: to explain everything, to recount everything. It doesn't matter if we feel at fault in the relationship with God: we aren't good friends, we aren't grateful children; we aren't faithful spouses. He continues to love us. It's what Jesus demonstrates definitively in the Last Supper when He says: "This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant of my blood" (Luke 22:20). In that gesture, Jesus anticipates in the Cenacle the mystery of the Cross. God is a faithful ally: if men stop loving, He, however, continues to love, even if love leads Him to Calvary. God is always close to the door of our heart and He waits for us to open to Him. And sometimes He knocks at our heart, but He is not invasive: He waits. God's patience with us is the patience

of a Papa, of one who loves us so much. I would say, it's the patience of both a father and a mother — always close to our heart. When He knocks, He does so with tenderness and much love.

Let us all try to pray like this, entering in the mystery of the Covenant. To put ourselves in prayer in the merciful arms of God, to feel ourselves enveloped in that mystery of happiness that the Trinitarian life is, to feel ourselves as guests that do not merit so much honor. And to respect God, in the wonder of prayer: is it possible that You only know love? He doesn't know hatred. He is hated but He doesn't know hatred. He only knows love. This is the God to whom we pray. This is the incandescent nucleus of all Christian prayer, the God of love, our Father, who waits for us and accompanies us.

(Source: Pope Francis General Audience, 13 May 2020)



### Holy Father's Prayer Intention for June

### 六月份教宗祈禱意向

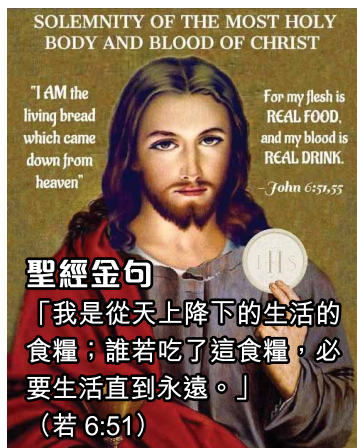


#### 為心靈的道路

願所有受苦的人能找到他們生命的道路，讓自己接受耶穌聖心的觸動。

#### The Way of the Heart

We pray that all those who suffer may find their way in life, allowing themselves to be touched by the Heart of Jesus.



#### 聖經金句

「我是從天上降下的生活的食糧；誰若吃了這食糧，必  
要生活直到永遠。」  
(若 6:51)



# Living Word of God – June 2020

07

反省祈禱

## Exodus 34:6

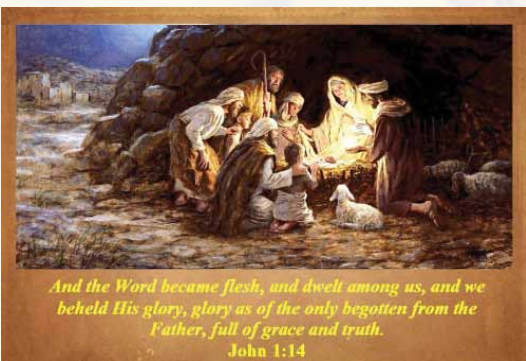
*And He passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness."*

### Reflection

The immensity of God's steadfast love, mercy and fidelity is revealed in Moses' encounter with God at Mount Sinai prior to the enactment of the Law of God. This shines forth from the various palmists whereby the central theme of God's steadfast love and mercy are revealed as salvation and justice for the oppressed (psalm 103:8-12). Similar parallel expressions can be found in psalm 86:15, psalm 145:8, Nehemiah 9:17; 14:18, and in prophetic books of Jeremiah 3:12, Joel 2:13, Jonah 4:2.<sup>(1)</sup> God gives paternal care to fragile man, but after all, man is nothing but dust (psalm 103:14 c.f. Gen. 3:19). These beautiful words of praises in psalm proclaim the love that God has for man: "So splendid is the grace of God and his love for us, that he has done much more for us than we can ever comprehend".<sup>(2)</sup>

The gospel of the Holy Trinity Sunday is the heart of God's plan of salvation in Jesus. A reflection on the nature of the Trinitarian God comes from Jesus' discourse to Nicodemus in John's 3:16-18 about the saving role that Jesus plays in God's plan as the Son. It is frequently used as a passage for profession of faith and a call to conversion by evangelization.

The greeting in our Mass "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." is taken directly from 2 Corinthians 13:13. It is used not only to highlight the Trinity but also the prominent qualities of grace, love and fellowship in God. It proclaims God's love for us made known in Jesus Christ and sustained through the power of the Holy Spirit. These are identified with the three Persons in God which form an essential part of the Creed.



*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*  
John 1:14

John's gospel emphasizes the New Covenant. Just as a new creation replaced the old, a new covenant replaces the old covenant with Israel on Sinai (Exod. 34), because the people who originally were his own rejected Jesus. One of the old covenant signs of the Word of God with Israel and her successor was the Tabernacle made in the desert kept in the sanctuary and later in the Temple. Both sanctuary and the Temple represent the divine presence among God's people. In the new covenant, the humanity of the Word and his flesh becomes the supreme localization of divine presence and glory. The word became flesh (with human nature) and set up his Tabernacle in our midst (made his dwelling among us). Our relationship in our community can mirror the creative, sacrificial and empowering love of the Trinity.

The description of God in Exodus 34:6 in the old covenant describing him to be "rich in kindness and fidelity" is now overshadowed in the New Testament by "full of grace and truth"

in John 1:14. In the Old Testament, while the word of God (the Ten Commandments), was engraved in stone on Sinai for Moses more importantly the word of God is now embodied in the flesh of Jesus<sup>(3)</sup> as well as our own conscience.

### Prayers

God, it is your unreserved love that gave us Christ to redeem our sin by dying willfully on the cross. It is that same love that results in the gift of the Spirit. Mutual love and Trinitarian fellowship is opposed to hatred, mistrust, selfishness, separation, isolation, racism, rivalry and discrimination. We pray this Sunday and every day that the Trinity dwells in us looking to build-up our community in fellowship.



Arrogance symbolizes an absence of mutual trust and interdependence. It cannot lead us to reflect in the inter-subjectivity with God. Let us despise pride and arrogance which connotes the spirit of isolation and superiority. The one in three Trinitarian unity in love has called us to participate in the unreserved love of Christ. God is love and the one who remains in love remains in God. The Trinity dwells in them not as an individual but in fellowship of our community. Please make us an instrument of your peace so that we can pass your blessings "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all of you." to the world. Amen.

### Challenges to Prayer<sup>(4)</sup>

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says: "Ask, and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened" (Matthew 7:7-8; Luke 11:9-10). With the inspiration from these gospel verses we ask God for something and we might expect to get it. However, life is not like that. We often make petitions for things that we do not get. But before we start thinking that God is not there or that God does not really care, we must remember that:

- (1) Not all the things we want are right. We cannot expect God to do a wrong thing.
- (2) Not all the things we want are good for us and God will not give us something bad.
- (3) God gives us freedom. We cannot expect God to undo the damage we do ourselves by abusing our freedom, but God can turn a seemingly a bad act into a saving grace as salvation to his people.

Even though what God made is good, there is evil coming out of our incorrect moral decision that allows it to slip into our world. Bad things do happen even though they are not our fault. This is a mystery. In the resurrection of Jesus, God shows us that evil will not triumph. God will win over evil.

### Reference:

- (1) The Navarre Bible: The Psalms and the Song of Solomon – text and commentaries. T.J. International 2017, pg. 341-342.
- (2) St. Thomas Aquinas, Expositio in Credum, 61.
- (3) Raymond E. Brown. The gospel and Epistles of John, the Liturgical Press Collegeville Minnesota 56321, 1988, pg. 23-24.
- (4) Linda Quigley and Peter O' Reidy: Community of Love. Veritas Publication 2003 pg. 145.

(Source: Parish Formation Group)





# Shepherd Flock's Dialogue June 2020



<b>1st June</b> <b>Weekday Mass resumes</b> 7:15am, 6:00pm (Chinese)	<b>5th June</b> First Friday of the month Feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus Mass 8:00pm (Chinese)	<b>7th June</b> <b>Sunday Mass resumes</b> Feast of the Holy Trinity	<b>13th June</b> Feast of St. Anthony Parish Anniversary Mass 8:00pm (Chinese)
<b>14th June</b> Corpus Christi Feast of St. Anthony	<b>17th June</b> Commemoration of All Faithful Departed Mass 6:00pm (Chinese)	<b>19th June</b> Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus 8:00pm Mass (Chinese)	<b>21st June</b> 12th Sunday of the Year
<b>28th June</b> 13th Sunday of the Year			

Welcome to 11:30am English Mass

## Attending Sunday Mass

As the pandemic is not yet completely contained, Cardinal John Tong, as a discretionary measure (which will be eventually terminated when the local situation is back to normal), permits the following alternatives:

- Those who have worries may attend Sunday Mass online (and receive spiritual Communion) or perform some acts of devotion, such as reading the Bible, etc.
- Granted that the seating in churches is being restricted at present, one can take part in a weekday Mass instead of the Sunday Mass.
- Members of the faithful who are sick, as well as those who have someone undergoing "self-quarantine" at home, should not go to church on Sunday; instead, they can attend the Sunday Mass online or perform some acts of devotion.

## Reflection with Pope Francis

# "The Prayer of the Christian" (Psalm 63:2-5,9)

## God Satisfies the Thirsting Soul

*You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you; I thirst for you, my whole being longs for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water. I have seen you in the sanctuary and beheld your power and your glory. Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you. I will praise you as long as I live, and in your name I will lift up my hands. I cling to you; your right hand upholds me.*



**Prayer belongs to all:** to men of all religions, and probably also to those that don't profess any. Prayer is born in the secret of ourselves, in that interior place that spiritual authors often call "heart" (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2562-2563). Therefore, to pray is not something peripheral in us; it's not something secondary and marginal in us, but it is the most intimate mystery in us. It is this mystery that prays.

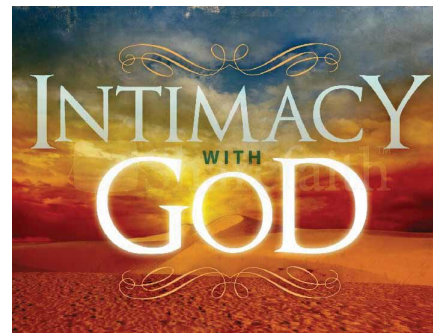
Prayer is a surge, it's an invocation that goes beyond us, something that is born in the intimacy of our person and reaches out because it feels the nostalgia of an encounter. That nostalgia that is more than a need, more than a necessity: it is a way. Prayer



is the voice of an "I" that is groping, which proceeds tentatively, in search of a "You."

A Christian's prayer is born of a revelation: the "You" did not remain enveloped in mystery, but entered into relationship with us. Christianity is the religion that celebrates continually God's "manifestation," namely His epiphany. The first feasts of the Liturgical Year are the celebration of this God who doesn't remain hidden, but who offers His friendship to men. God reveals His glory in the poverty of Bethlehem, in the contemplation of the

Magi, in the Baptism at the Jordan, in the miracle of the wedding of Cana. John's Gospel ends the great hymn of the Prologue with a synthetic affirmation: "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has made Him known" (1:18). It was Jesus who revealed God to us.



A Christian's prayer enters in relationship with the God of the most tender face, who doesn't want to strike fear in men. This is the first characteristic of Christian prayer.

Christianity has banished from the bond with God every "feudal" relationship. In our faith's patrimony expressions such as "subjection," "slavery" or "vassalage" are not present, but rather words such as "covenant," "friendship," "promise," "communion," "closeness." In his long farewell discourse to His disciples, Jesus said this: "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You

(continued on P.6)