

The Year of the Family

Pope Francis said in *Amoris Laetitia* that the strength of the family 'lies in its capacity to love and to teach how to love', and declared this the Year of the Family.

While every family may look different, most parents inevitably become their children's first teachers and role models.

I was blessed with the most amazing teachers growing up - my parents. They are hardworking, honest, and most of all, kind and compassionate. My brother and I grew up with parents that stimulated our curiosity and encouraged our ambitions. Our household was always filled with laughter. While our extra-curricular activities took over the weekly agenda, we always found time for Church on Sundays. This is worth mentioning because my Dad wasn't Catholic.

Although Dad wasn't baptized, he never once discouraged us from participating in Church activities. In fact, you wouldn't have known otherwise. I certainly didn't question anything since Dad attended mass every week with us, knew all the words to the prayers, and sang along to the hymns just like everyone else. Within our own family, we prayed that Dad may one day become Catholic as well, but we left that in God's hands. While Dad was a quiet observer on the sidelines, Mom was Catholicism personified. It's no surprise to anyone who knows her -



her radiant and warm personality makes it easy for her to seamlessly transition into any role. She actively seeks out volunteer opportunities and helps in any capacity she can, easily makes friends, and acts with empathy. From my first childhood Church experiences to my on-and-off participation in my teenage years, and to my now unwavering belief in the Church community, Mom has been there every step of the way. While I may have wandered off the path a few times, she constantly kept the faith, and was always there to guide me back on the right path. I can't help but think that her tireless living example may have rubbed off on Dad too, who to our amazement got baptized a few years ago, decades after being a sideline participant.

So as you can see, faith can start with one person. It starts with one, eventually expanding to one's family. Your individual actions may be making small impacts to those around you at the molecular level. Perhaps you are enabling them to see things in a different light, or simply inspiring them to think and act just a little differently.

I try to emulate my parents' teaching style in my own young family. Most of all, I try to replicate their examples of how to keep the faith strong within my family. Coincidentally, my husband Justin isn't Catholic either. Like my Dad, he simply isn't ready yet, but has never discouraged my kids Hannah

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and Alex from practising their Catholic faith. In our household, it is up to me to pass on the Catholic teachings to my children. It may be hard to describe abstract ideas to children, especially when it comes to the Bible. In this respect, I have found children to have unquestioning faith in their parents. I remember Hannah asking me once, if God was real. I told her yes, God is real if you believe, as I believe. She looked at me, said she believes and never asked me again. Likewise, I have told her stories of Easter, Christmas and even Noah's Ark. While an adult may find logical flaws in some of these stories, my child never did. You see, children have unwavering confidence in their parents. It is then up to us, as their teachers, to lead a purposeful life so that they may see the goodness in the world through our action and have faith in something beyond our human grasp.



The pandemic experience has shown us that in a year where social norms disappeared, what we crave most are social gatherings, family get-togethers and to be with those we love. While we may be missing our extended family's physical presence this year, let us all love in our full capacity within our own households. The Church is a family of families. May we all renew our own faith on an individual level, so that when we gather again in the near future, we will come back stronger as a community of believers in the Lord.

Jacqueline Lam



《家庭年》：宗座勸諭《愛的喜樂》讀後有感

教宗方濟各較早時頒佈 2020年12月8日至 2021年12月8日為《聖若瑟年》、和本年3月19日（聖若瑟瞻禮）至 2022年6月26日（第十屆世界家庭會議閉幕日）為《愛的喜樂家庭年》。藉著這兩個部份重疊的慶典，教宗希望普世教會熱心敬禮大聖若瑟，及重溫 2016年宗座勸諭《愛的喜樂》論家庭的愛。

堂區通訊在過去數月已多次提供聖若瑟年和有關敬禮的資訊，所以我現在祇就家庭年和《愛的喜樂》宗座勸諭作以下分享。

教宗方濟各於 2014 及 2015年，就家庭有關議題召開兩次世界主教會議；其後根據大會的建議在2016年聖若瑟瞻禮發表該份宗座勸諭。教宗現在藉著家庭年要求我們深入了解《勸諭》帶出的信息。

《勸諭》大致分為九個部份：(1) 從聖言看家庭；(2) 家庭的現實和挑戰；(3)藉耶穌認識家庭的聖召；(4) 婚姻之愛；(5)果實纍纍的愛；(6)牧靈建議；(7)加強

子女的教育；(8)陪伴、分辨及融合人性的脆弱；及(9)婚姻家庭靈修。因篇幅所限，本人未能在此詳細討論，祇能就其中要點和大家分享：



教宗清楚說明：家庭的喜樂亦是教會的喜樂；希望我們就婚姻及家庭在現今世界複雜的處境，能夠加強認識在教義、倫理、靈修和牧靈的需要。對於『佳偶天成』這觀念，教宗不盡贊同，認為一個完美的家庭不會突然由天降下；事實上，世上並無十全十美的家庭，亦沒有一個家庭自始就已經完善。無疑，在成家之前，雙方都有一個圓滿家庭的理想，但其後會發覺現實生活與理想有落差。由於雙方背景、教育、性格、生活習慣等等有別，人性的軟弱亦會導致張力及磨擦；所以家庭各成員必須願意無條件付出、互相接納、包容、彼此關愛、和睦相處；要不斷努力增進彼此的關係，以建造一個溫馨、和諧、喜樂、聖善和美好的家庭。

教宗明白家家有本難唸的經，每個家庭都有各自的問題和困難。耶穌、瑪利亞和若瑟的聖家當初何嘗沒有困惑、吃閉門羹、走難、失聯等問題，但憑著齊心、堅毅、忍耐和對上主的信靠，聖家仍然能夠保持喜樂。教宗鼓勵我們效法聖家，恆常一齊祈禱、互相關懷、信賴上主、並承行天主的旨意，上主當會祝福和護佑我們的家庭。

《勸諭》提醒教會牧者，在處理破碎婚姻、離婚和再婚、同居、同性結合等等家庭問題時，須以無比耐性、開放的心靈、及慈悲為懷的心態去聆聽、了解、接納和指導，並小心引領當事人回歸教會聖事和活動。教宗指出預防勝於治療，教會應加強家庭牧民各方面的事工：包括適婚人士的培育、婚姻聖事的恩寵、兒童教育、長者牧民、靈性培育、關注有危機的家庭，與家庭同行等等。教宗亦鼓勵公教家庭履行福傳的使命，參與堂區的家庭祈禱聚會、信仰小團體等活動，透過他們的分享和見證，增強家庭間的凝聚力，及與堂區牧者的聯繫。

現在謹以《聖家禱文》作結：

耶穌、瑪利亞、若瑟：我們在你們身上默觀真愛的光輝：我們以信賴之心投奔你們。

納匝肋聖家，求使我們的家庭成為共融的場所和祈禱的晚餐廳、真正的福音學校、和小型的家庭教會。

納匝肋聖家，求使家庭永遠不再有暴力、封閉和分裂；凡受傷和失足的人儘快獲得安慰和痊癒。

納匝肋聖家，求使我們眾人認識到家庭神聖而不可侵犯的特質、家庭在天主計劃中的美善。

耶穌、瑪利亞、若瑟：請俯聽、垂允我們的祈禱。亞孟。

Andrew Chau

The Echo

Family is Love

I recently celebrated my 50th golden wedding anniversary with my husband Tony. Our children helped us celebrate this occasion with a book of photos documenting our lives since getting married in 1971. In the book, there were photos of our wedding, our early days in Canada, our children as babies, and our family life as they grew up. The photos reminded us of such great memories; the weddings of our children, the birth of their children and all the time we've spent together over the years. It is hard to believe so much time has flown by.

Family to me, is Love. It is the place whereby one can share with both joy and sorrow, obtaining all the necessarily support when needed, thus making any burden light. Family therefore is not only a place where Tony and I know our children love us and we greatly appreciate them. We know we can count on them, whenever we are in need. Despite being overseas, my daughter calls us nearly everyday and we have video calls with her like she is here. Before the pandemic, she visited every summer with our son-in-law and grandchildren. They would stay for the summer and we would spend time together. We would all wake up early to attend the pancake breakfast, on family day at the Calgary Stampede. As they live in Hong Kong, we appreciate the time we have with them.

Tony and I live with our son, daughter-in-law, and our grandsons. We experience love in our family life together. Our house is noisy with the sounds of laughter and sometimes screaming when the children are playing and running around. Our home feels very alive and full of love. We pray together, attend mass together and dine together as a family. Love is our family's support for one another and us taking care of each other.

Above all, I am thankful for God's love. In closing, let us pray the Peace Prayer of St. Francis:

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
And where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console;
To be understood, as to understand;
To be loved, as to love;
For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
And it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.
Amen.



Theresa Mak

對耶穌會神父 James Martin 十二句話的感受

一位神父，在他50歲生日那天，寫了12句話！閱讀過後覺得受益匪淺！

凡事都有定時，不管是栽種、哭笑、醫治、哀慟、生死 均有時，連天上的飛鳥，路邊的野花，祂都會照顧，何況是人呢？

我想：是呀，一天的苦已夠多了，一切均會過去！所以，我們別憂慮那麼多，沒有用的。

天主創造各種人，各有各的才能（塔冷通），要做聖人，就是要做你自己。

我想：停止扮演任何人，只要好好地做好你自己，這會讓你避免許多的痛心疾首。

祈禱是謙虛的表現，當我們軟弱、不足之時更需要它。希望父母從小訓練，培養孩子的信德，常為周圍的人及父母祈禱。

我想：所以沒有最好的祈禱法則，對個人最有效的方式，就是最好的了。

記住三件事，能夠幫你省卻不少煩惱：

- 1) 你，不是天主；不要判斷人。
- 2) 世上，不是天堂；不要抱怨世界的不完美。
- 3) 克制，不要發怒、犯渾。人一發怒，平安就遠離了。

我想：我要努力呀，不發怒、不判斷他人，一切論斷均在天主。

你心底裏最深處、最真心的渴求，就是天主對你的渴求。反過來亦然，好好聆聽並跟隨祂。

我想：我祈求聖神幫助我們聆聽天主的旨意，給我們智慧作選擇，跟隨祂，接受，放下。

天主的恩寵足夠我們用，祂賜給疲倦者力量，無力者勇氣，只要我們在順境中感恩，在逆境中依靠祂！

我想：在你心中，早已有一個概念：最理想的我，是個怎樣的人。你就當自己是「那個人」去生活，靠著天主的恩寵，你就會成為那個人。

人常擔心最壞的事會發生，其實身處苦難、病痛時，人才會謙卑向祂訴求，上主是我的牧者，是生命的一切！

我想：我要常常提醒自己，不要太擔心「最壞的事」如果發生會怎樣怎樣，就算事真的發生了，天主還是與我一起，我自會感覺到，真的。

不苟求任何人贊同你，喜歡你，天主是一樣米養百樣人，只要祂愛內必無恐懼！

我想：我知道了！我不能夠強迫任何人同意、誇獎、仰慕、喜歡，甚至愛我。

人比人，氣死人，要為自己活，為天主活，常與主相遇，才是莫大的幸福啊！

我想：當我們跟別人比較，我們通常錯誤地幻想別人的生活，我們現實的生活也就輸掉了。即是說：人比人，只會沮喪。

要活出基督的生命雖不易，但主與我們同在，重要是過程，而非結果。

我想：就算你終於明白何謂對的事，何謂基督徒應該做的事，要生活出來還是會很困難。無論如何還是要生活出來。

The Echo

「我愛你」--- 要多對兒女說，如同天主不管何時都愛我們一樣。

「多謝你」--- 對有恩有助於我們的人或夫妻之間，要常常表示感謝與珍惜！

我想：天主，多謝祢！

寬恕我吧！

我為你高興！

當然可以，為什麼不？

好！天主願意的事，都好！

學習「釋放自己」--- 在阻礙憐憫及愛的人及事上，將會更愉悅、更長壽，而得到自由！

我想：想要平安、喜樂，先要祈求天主，在一切阻礙著你去愛、去憐憫的事情中，釋放你、讓你自由。

經文：敬畏上主是人的光榮、誇耀、喜悅和歡愉的冠冕。敬畏上主，悅樂心神，賜與喜樂、愉快和長壽（德1:11-12）

國語組Helen Yao

生命影響生命

當我年青時便認識了陳美蓮，她帶領我去組織兒童主日學，很開心，每個主日我們都好像影片「仙樂飄飄處處聞」的女主角一樣，與小朋友形影不離。

陳美蓮分別在明愛醫院及基督教聯合醫院服事了31年牧靈工作，直至退休。2018年初她知道自己患上晚期肺癌，並不是太震驚，一方面是因為過去在醫院服事的經驗，當中的所見所聞，讓她覺得不奇怪，反問自己：「為什麼不可以是我？」另一方面，在明愛醫院上班的第一天，在癌症病房視察時，上主已給了她心靈警醒的話語：「今日你探癌症病人，哪怕一天你有癌症時，別人來探你呢？」



她心裡回應：「我要珍惜我的時間、我的健康、我的能力。」她重新確認信仰，確知主與她同在，賜給她平安。所以，她反而能冷靜處理，寫下要做的事，並清楚交待給家人，讓自己無憾。

醫生建議她接受化療，如不接受，預計只餘一年壽命，她決定不接受化療，因為她知道生命不在醫生手裡，而是在天主手裡。她要做的是把握餘下光陰，祝福別人。



今年（2021年）4月20日，美蓮情況轉差，需要加大氧氣度，並轉往寧養院的單人房。

同日，一位新入院的晚期院友尹先生表達臨終心願，想領洗加入天主教，期望他日能在天堂與家人重聚。院牧及一位天主教醫生隨即幫忙聯絡神父，並安排於4月22日洗禮。美蓮得知此事，靈機一觸，想到時間倉促，院友未必找到代父母，遂自薦成為他的代母，並與尹太太、女兒及基督徒同工一同見證院友領洗，場面非常感人。

在2021年5月4日早上六時，尹先生的女兒致電告知父親在彌留中，以視像通話一起祈禱。期間，她腦海中呈現當日凌晨三時許，她曾被一陣陣香醇蜜糖味弄醒。她清楚聞到那味道，彷彿有一杯香醇馥郁的蜜糖水放在小枱上。心想，冷氣機開著，關上窗，香味不能從窗外吹入。鄰房院友睡了，護士當值中，無人半夜飲蜜糖。也記起，醒前夢中見有一條線蔓延，畫著一隻羊被耶穌背在肩膀上，線條很流暢，很有美感（在房內不見有手繪畫），她深深地欣賞。

她將這情景喻意給尹先生的家人聽，牧者耶穌帶他到常青草地，那裡也有流奶、流蜜，是永不飢餓的福地。當日上午十一時，尹先生與世長辭，在視像中見他非常安詳，如憩睡安眠中。耶穌說：「我就是復活，就是生命；信從我的，即使死了，仍要活著；凡活著而信從我的人，必永遠不死。你信麼？」（若11:25-26）

美蓮一直以為在復活節時會返天家，原來天主有祂更奇妙的安排，送她這份「驚喜」，正如她所說：「有誰想到一個垂危的病人可以成為別人的代母？」她堅毅的生命，見證主耶穌復活的大能，賜人生存的勇氣及永恆的盼望！因為她確切相信：「上主是我的牧者，我實在一無所缺。」（詠23:1）

以上是美蓮在WhatsApp group跟我們的分享，我以她為驕傲，她有如此豐盛的人生，她最後有一位死後直達天堂的代仔等候她，為她祈禱，天主一定保守一切，亞孟。

The Echo

戶外彌撒

五月九日，我參與了主日戶外彌撒，這是六個月以來首次的實體彌撒。

去年十一月，卑詩省政府在疫情中下令取消公開彌撒。直至本年三月，限制令稍為放寬，彌撒准許以戶外形式舉行。除此之外，教區得到特別批准，可以在六星期內舉行四日彌撒活動，於是各堂區便積極籌備逾越節三日慶典及救主慈悲主日禮儀。因每台彌撒只限五十人，於是當我所屬的堂區一開始接受預約，我便趕快登記；我不奢望預約登記每台彌撒，我只希望可參與其一，好讓其他教友都有機會參與。心想終於能達成參與實體彌撒的願望，可惜在聖週期間，政策再度更改，取消了特別批准，於是參與聖週禮儀便告落空。雖然政策仍准許五十人的戶外彌撒，但在大溫地區只有非常少數堂區舉行，而有些只歡迎已註冊的堂區教友預約，後來從姪女處得知她所屬的堂區將會舉行戶外彌撒，並且無限制非堂區教友參加，於是我終於獲得一個等了六個月的機會。

是日我於彌撒一小時前出發，帶備了摺椅，驅車前往**St. Joseph the Worker** 聖堂。聖堂與學校以大草地相連，草地上架起了數個大型帳篷，帳篷前放置了簡樸的祭台，神父在祭台前以親切的笑容向各教友問好，然後彌撒就在晴天和微風下舉行。一個平靜簡單的彌撒，帶給我一個安寧的心境，一個與主結合的時刻。

數天後從堂區報告得知我所屬的花地瑪聖母堂將會舉行戶外彌撒，實在令人興奮，決定嘗試在五旬節主日參與。當日天氣突然轉為密雲，有些擔心彌撒會否如期在戶外舉行，於是在九時先收看堂區網上直播的法語彌撒，確定仍在戶外，然後提早驅車前往。英語彌撒在十時半舉行，但因只限五十人及不設預約，在十時許已有多人到達，我相信大家都像我一樣，抱著萬分渴望及期待的心而來。

我置身在神父住宅的後園，望著樹蔭下簡潔的祭台，在雀鳥鳴聲陪同下靜靜等候。悠揚的琴聲在陽台上響起，優美的進堂詠跟隨加入，彌撒開始了。這個慶日彌撒帶給我很大的滿足，我感受到團體的共融和力量；能與一眾不相識的教友一起念經，一起答唱，一起在彌撒後收拾椅子，是一件絕對美妙的樂事。想必是聖神臨於我們當中，指導我們為主作證，服侍他人。在驅車離開的一刻，我與教友們揮手及以笑容道別，為參與這台戶外彌撒劃上一個完美的句號。

迴聲編輯 Teresa Tsui



上主看顧我的家

今年是教宗頒示的家庭年。望著牆上的聖家像，頓覺時光飛逝，轉眼移民來加拿大已有27年，回望這段日子，感恩天主的照顧，使我能在這裏安居樂業。

來加拿大初期，並無親友在這裡，只知道有一間中文聖堂，和聖堂聯絡後，得到麥神父和多位教友的幫助，慢慢適應這邊的環境，溶入主內這個大家庭，因著在香港時受過讀經的訓練，獲麥神父任命負責安排讀經組的工作至今。

兩年後，因為教友日漸增多，舊聖堂不敷應用，獲教區批准搬到更大的OLPH 教堂，巧妙地和我的聖名有關連 Perpetua，更加覺得是天主安排我來這裡的。因為加拿大不是我們移民的第一選擇。

孩子們接受這邊的教育、工作、結婚、生子。展開他們的人生旅程。現在我已經有了7個可愛的孫子，也已領洗成為天主的兒女。他們參加主日學，接受應有的聖事 --- 堅振，初領聖體，也參與堂區的各種活動。6月是我和先生結婚47週年的紀念。祈求上主繼續看顧我的家庭，帶領我們走正確的道路，常活在上主的恩寵下。

也祈求疫情早日結束，讓我們回復正常的生活。亞孟。

讀經組 Margaret Ho



「家庭年」- 隨筆

教宗方濟各將今年定為「聖若瑟年」。聖若瑟是天主的忠僕，聖母瑪利亞的淨配，他亦是一直照顧瑪利亞及小時候的耶穌，一家三口，被喻為聖家。聖若瑟身為一家之長，是我們家庭的典範。所以教宗方濟各亦定今年為「家庭年」。鼓勵各地天主的兒女，效法聖家，在自己的家庭中，活出天主的愛。

回望33年前，我和太太移民到卡城後，很感謝天主恩賜我們兒女成群，一共有六個小生命。當中有五個小生命在母胎中，因為太太小產，天主便先接了他們到天國等待我們。現在女兒嘉恩便接受了天主的使命，喜樂地陪伴著我和太太，一家三口，樂也融融。現在女兒已經長大成，有自己的事業，在今年亦將會成立一個小家庭了。

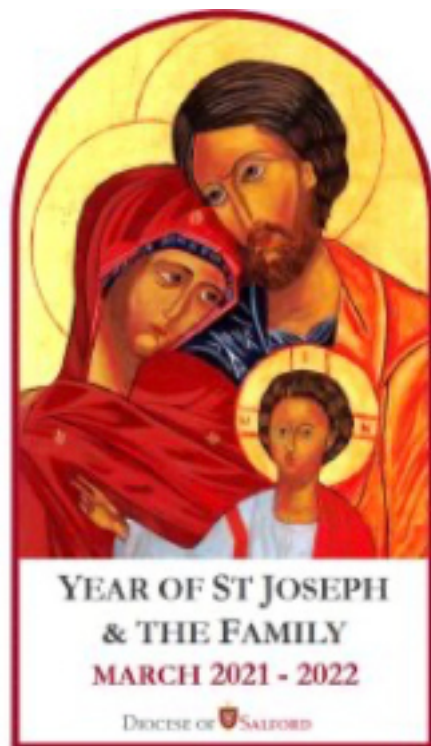
我們每個人在家庭中成長，大家都要用愛去維繫的。父母用心照顧兒女，而子女便要關懷父母。這特別在一個有信仰家庭中，可以見證到天主的愛。一家人除了要分享歡樂，更重要是共渡時艱。大家彼此坦誠，沒有什麼事是不可溝通的。遇到了問題，第一時間去解決，一家人沒有隔夜仇，只要大家敞開心扉，那麼自然便能共享天倫之樂了。

我們也有另一個家呢！不是有兩頭住家，而是我們信仰的大家庭 -- 我們恭敬天主的聖堂了。你們有沒有對聖堂有家的感覺呢？主日彌撒後，有沒有機會跟兄弟姊妹一起去閒談呢？去問候及關懷他們呢？

我們在家中會去做家務，打點家庭的一切。在聖堂內，我們又可以做些什麼呢？感謝天主，我們堂區的兄弟姊妹除了關心及照顧這個聖堂的大家庭的經濟開支外，天主也派遣天使為這個大家庭去打點一切。例如有義工的兄弟姊妹去為聖堂的雲石地板清理打掃，有些義工為停車場的柏油地作修補，有些在聖母岩及花園種花，這些都是我們為聖堂大家庭付出的點滴。

所以家庭是一個去愛的地方、一個去分享喜悅的地方、一個去付出的地方，更重要的是一個彼此支持的地方。你又怎樣去體驗今年的「家庭年」呢？

主佑！



林偉良執事

讓愛傳愛

聖母軍手冊內有一段這樣寫：「與傳教士不同的地方，就是團員並非從外間滲入社會；他們已是置身其中的一員。」

原來在我們日常生活中，在傳教方面，教友是最接近人們的，最易感染他人，在日常的互動中，在某程度上，最能影響他人。

保祿宗徒就有更深入的闡釋：「對軟弱的人，我就成為軟弱的，為贏得那軟弱的人；對一切人，我就成為一切，為的是總要救些人。我所行的一切，都是為了福音，為能與人共沾福音的恩許。」格前（9：22-23）

我們與人相處談話時，要進入他們的生活裏面，走近他們（為一切人，成為一切），為的是使我們講的說話能夠幫助他們，讓他們認識真理，繼而認識耶穌，以愛去傳愛。雖然我們可能未必能全部做到，但總要相信是能有些影響的。

恩保德神父也曾講：「要傳揚福音，我們不能只單單做說故事的人，我們自己也要成為故事的一部份。」

要感染他人，是要將自己成為主角，在一言一行上，在我們身上都能顯出天主對我們的愛。讓靠近我們的人，感受到我們信仰的喜樂，特別在惡劣的環境中，仍能保持對天主的堅持。

全能的天主，一路以來我們並不優秀，只能依賴禰的助佑，鞏固我們對禰的忠信。求禰賜我們像禰一樣良善心謙，讓禰成為我們的泉源和動力，讓更多的人也能分享禰的慈愛，亞孟。

Emily Chan, Echo Editor





Where does Dad Go?

On March 19th, the Church announced that 2021-2022 would celebrate “Amoris Laetitia Family” also known as “Year of the Family”. When the word “Family” comes to mind what do you see? For me, I see my parents and my brother. The people most dear and close to my heart. These individuals not only shaped who I am today, but also helped me build my foundation in faith. Often times, when I am asked about my faith, I like to share a funny story about how my dad became Catholic. This funny conversation that took place many moons ago that still spark smiles and laughter in our family to this day. Perhaps it was God’s way of inviting my dad to join His amazing family.

My mom was and is a devout Catholic since she was young, my grandmother was the one who introduced her to this amazing faith where my mom finds a lot of strength in. Even after she married my dad and came to Canada, she still tried to find time to attend church. I was about three years old when she started bringing me to church. However, it wasn’t until I turned five years old that I officially got baptized. Therefore, knowing God and Jesus had always been a part of my life. Unfortunately, that was not the case for my dad. My dad grew up in an atheist family. My grandparents and aunties from his side never attended church and didn’t really have any faith background.

When my parents first came to Canada, life was hard, my parents would work 6-7 days a week to make ends meet. When my little brother came along, my dad worked even more to support our growing family. Sunday was his one and only day off. Well, when you only have one day off, what is one thing you really REALLY want to do? IT IS TO SLEEP of course! Every Sunday, my mom would bring me to church and each Sunday she would ask if my dad would be interested to join to see what it is like.



This was always my dad’s response. “No, I am not going, I have a headache, and I want to sleep.” My mom would ask each time, and each time she would be a bit disappointed and just bring me and my baby brother to church.

One Sunday evening, I was telling my mom about what I had learned in my Sunday school class with teacher Teresa Wu that day. I told my mom how she had told us that if we listened to God and was good, we would one day go to heaven. My mom smiled and told me: “Yes, as long as you love God with your heart, go to church, and listen to your parents, you will one day go to heaven too!” I felt extremely happy and continued eating dinner. As I was munching on my rice and fish, a big question suddenly came to my mind. My mom just said, you have to go to church in order to go to Heaven! But Dad doesn’t go to church! So, then I asked: “But mom, where will Dad go when he dies? He doesn’t go to church or believe and love God like we do.”

My mom looked at me and at my dad and went back to eating and calmly but coldly said: “I don’t really know where he will go, he’s probably not going to be with us after we die.” I felt kind of sad but didn’t really go on asking questions. I looked at my dad and I just remember the awkward and scared expression he had on his face. He didn’t say anything after what

my mom had said.

The following week, on Sunday, we continued our usual routine of getting ready for church when we noticed that my usual snoozing dad was up and getting ready. My mom asked: "What are you doing? Aren't you going to continue sleeping?" My dad quickly replied, "I am going to church with you and the kids." My mom felt puzzled and asked: "Why?" My dad replied: "Because I want to go to heaven and be with you guys when I die too." My mom burst out laughing. However, after that day, my dad has always come to church with us on Sunday. That same year when September came around, my dad joined RCIA and got baptized after that. To this day, going to church as a family has always been our family tradition. No matter rain or snow.



Although the past year and a half has been challenging to consistently go to church as a family due to the pandemic. Our family still tries to attend in person mass when we can and will also do virtual mass as well. To this day, I find this funny experience amazing and interesting. My dad has always been a kind of goofy and funny person and it seems like God used a very humorous way to interact with my dad to welcome him into his Church family. I am glad my Sunday School teacher told me about Heaven, I am glad I asked that question because it allowed my dad to get to know the unconditional love of the Lord.

To this day, my dad likes to pray about many things and even encourages my brother and I to do the same when we forget. The past year and a half have definitely been challenging for many families; however, do not forget that God is always ready to listen to our prayers. Remember to pray often and to listen to what he has to say to you, whether in your daily conversations with families or coworkers or friends. Trust in the Lord and all will go according to his amazing plans for you!

Father's Day is also coming soon, my challenge to anyone who reads this is to pray for your family and for your dads who work hard all the time to provide for his family. Ask St. Joseph to be their guide and example in love and faith!

Peggy Yip (Echo Editor, Sunday School Coordinator, YAG member)



Getting to know the Holy Family

On March 19, 2021, the feast of St. Joseph, Pope Francis declared it to be the Year of the Family and a special time to highlight the importance of family and loved ones. With that being said, this is a great opportunity for us to become closer to our loved ones and show our love to our own families. As well, I think it is a good time to draw closer to our heavenly family, the Holy Family. There was a guest speaker during the marriage preparation course that I took who emphasized that we should try to mirror our own families after the Holy Family. Not only is the Holy Family a good, perfect example of what a family should be like, the Holy Family is a School of Love that teaches us how we should be striving to treat our own families.

I have recently gotten the opportunity to get to know the Holy Family more through prayer and devotionals. There is a beautiful devotional called “33 Days of Morning Glory” by Fr. Michael Gaitley which is Marian Consecration that helps us open our hearts to Our Blessed Mother, allowing for her to bring us to Jesus. Each week, the book focuses on different saints who have a devotion to Mary, and talks about how they grew closer with our Blessed Mother. St. Louis de Montfort, St. Maximillian Kolbe, St. Mother Theresa and St. Pope John Paul II are the saints that are talked about in depth in this book. In particular, the passion and zeal that each saint had to become more like Mary was inspiring.



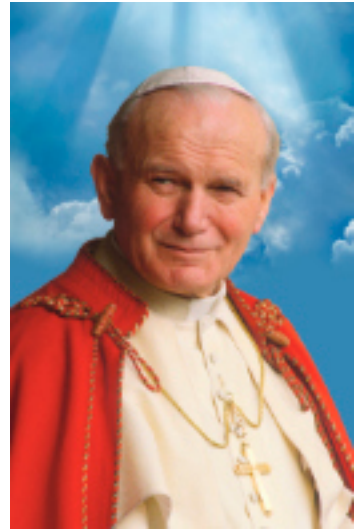
For example, St. Louis de Montfort wrote the original 33-day Marian devotion “True Devotion to Mary”, declaring that the consecration is a “short, easy, secure and perfect way” to become a saint. He devoted his life to living according to God’s will, even inspiring hundreds of people to come together to build a monument to commemorate the Passion of the Christ. After 15 months of work, the government decided to destroy the monument. Prior to the destruction, St. Louis de Montfort blessed the monument and said, “We had hope to build a Calvary here. Let us build it in our hearts. Blessed be God”. His continual trust in God’s plan, as well as his love for Mary allowed him to live a holy and humble life.

St. Maximillian Kolbe had such a desire and devotion to Mary that he created a group called the “Militia Immaculata”, with the goal to bring people to God through developing a relationship with loving Mother Mary. The key is to understand who Mary is as the Immaculate Conception. St. Maximillian Kolbe teaches us to be open to what Mary can teach us in terms of following God’s will, following her example to allow the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, and becoming instruments to allow Mary to teach us to become great saints. Eventually St. Maximillian Kolbe went on to become a martyr, and died in the place of another prisoner at Auschwitz during the reign of Nazi Germany.



St. Mother Theresa is well known for her acts of charity amongst the poverty in Calcutta. She had a great thirst for Jesus and the deep desire to meet Jesus in His suffering. Mother Theresa had three visions that helped reinforce her call - one of which she was in front of a great crowd in immense sorrow and suffering. Mother Theresa was kneeling near Our Lady, who said to her “Take care of them — they are mine. — Bring them to Jesus — carry Jesus to them. — Fear not.” Our Lady comforted Mother Theresa and also supported her in her vocation and calling, just as Our Blessed Mother also yearns to do the same for us in our vocation to our family (and beyond)—whether it is at the capacity of a mother, a father, a child, a sibling.

St. Pope John Paul II is another saint that we have heard of, and shared the Earth with in our lifetime. St. Pope John Paul II is a Marian saint, thoroughly trained in theology and also a Pope, making him a triple gift to the world. His story is linked to Fatima, Portugal, where the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared to three shepherd children. There are many miracles and wonders that happened in the span of her apparitions to these children, but one of the most notable visions that the children saw was a “bishop dressed in white”, whom they understood to be the Pope. To their distress, they saw that he would suffer much and then be shot and killed. They disclosed this only to Church authorities, and thus became the last “secret” of Fatima. 64 years after the very first apparition of Our Lady of Fatima, on May 13, 1981, Pope John Paul II was riding in St. Peter’s Square when suddenly two shots rang out and a gunman fired at the Pope in close range. The first bullet grazed his elbow, while the second bullet missed the major abdominal artery by one tenth of an inch. If the artery been struck or grazed, the Pope would have died in transit to the hospital. When Pope John Paul II realized this blessing, he stated “One hand fired, and another guided the bullet”. In fact, the Pope believed that it was the hand of Our Lady of Fatima that protected him and guided the bullet. A month later, he consecrated the world to Mary’s Immaculate Heart, “To you, Mary, I repeat: Totus tuus ego sum”, which means “I am totally yours”. Through St. Pope John Paul II, we learn that by consecrating ourselves totally to Mary, we will be protected and guided by her in our life.



Not only is Mary and her Immaculate Heart an important guide within our faith, her husband, St. Joseph is also a steadfast role model to us. It has been declared the Year of Saint Joseph since December 8, 2020, and we also have much to learn from him. Within the Bible, we never hear St. Joseph in a speaking part, but we are able to gain more understanding of how we should behave through his actions. Another book titled, “Consecration to Jesus Through St. Joseph” from Dr. Gregory Bottaro helps us understand the fatherhood of St. Joseph, along with his silence, deep interior life, charity, humility and purity. In the Bible, it is evident of his abandonment to God’s will - after receiving a dream that Baby Jesus is in danger in Bethlehem, he does not hesitate to bring the entire family to Egypt until they are called back into Nazareth later on in Jesus’ life. St. Joseph shows his love by doing everything he can to protect his family, and being docile to where God leads him.

In getting to know our Heavenly Mother, Mary and our foster father St. Joseph, we are better able to understand how Jesus was brought up and to draw closer to His Sacred Heart. During the Year of the Family, I invite you to get to know the Holy Family more and learn from them as examples on how we can treat our own families with love, kindness and grace. Let’s all aim to become saints in our modern generation and allow for the Holy Family to bring us into heaven!

Jenny Lam (Echo Editor, Youth Group leader)

編者的話

轉眼又是六月，網上「迴聲」已有一年了！編輯組特別感謝教友們的支持，使我們得以繼續。

祝願大家在炎熱的暑假中，可以好好享受陽光，舒展身心。「迴聲」十月再刊，主佑！

Editor's Note

June is here in the blink of an eye, and it has been a year since the "Echo" went online! The editorial team is especially grateful for the continuous support of all parishioners.

We wish you all have a nice summer holiday! "Echo" will have a break for the summer and resume in October.

Editors

Anne Lam, Emily Chan, Jenny Lam, Josephine Li, Peggy Yip, Winnie Lau, Jane Leung, Teresa Tsui