

2022年 聖誕節

# 天主教聖多默宗徒堂

## 堂區特刊



青衣青綠街五號 電話：2432 2933 傳真：2436 4772  
網址：www.stthomaschurch.org.hk 電郵：office@stthomaschurch.org.hk



## 牧者的話

### Blessed to be a blessing 成為一個福源是蒙福的

Sr. Shinoby Thomas

施樂怡修女

你曾經嘗試過觸摸一個電圍網嗎？如果你和其他人手牽手排成一行直線，第一個人觸摸圍網，你便可以感受到電流朝著隊伍向下移動的效果。就像一陣漣漪…漣漪效應的基本概念是我們所有人都是相關連的。

我們所想和所做的每一件事情，都會影響與我們共同生活的人，而他們的反應也相應地影響其他人。透過細小的決定，其實我們每一個人都有能力去改變這個世界。

在聖經中把這個過程稱為「祝福」，教導我們蒙受祝福，感到喜樂和受重視時，我們也需要去祝福別人。你有嘗試為別人送上祝福而內心感到喜樂嗎？天主對亞巴郎說：「我要使你成為一個大民族，我必祝福你，使你成名，成為一個福源。」(創12:2) 蒙受祝福並不是指去數算和要求自己認為應得的事物；接受了祝福是指去活出悅納天主的生活，進一步去融入天主的王國。

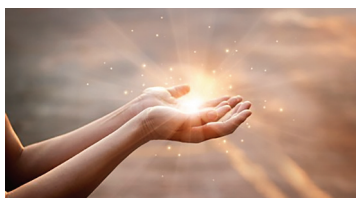
我們大多數人都喜歡收到禮物。因為知道有人關愛我們、特別重視我們是多麼美好的感覺。當我們送贈禮物給別人時，大家有同樣的感覺嗎？當我年幼時，母親常對我們說，在我們祝福別人時，天主就會照料我們關注的所有需要。你越能夠祝福別人，天主更會祝福你的生活。對呀，我自幼開始就能夠體驗到這一點。聖路加告訴我們：「你們給，也就給你們；並且還要好用的，連按帶搖，以致外溢的升斗，倒在你們的懷裡。」(路6:38) 天主祝福我們，祂關愛我們。因此我們也可以成為別人的福源。祂教導我們，所以我們可以教導別人。祂安慰我們，從而我們可以安慰別人。

當一枝蠟燭燃亮起另外一枝蠟燭時，它沒有失去什麼的。蠟燭反而傳遞光芒賦予另一枝蠟燭能力去為天主光照，令到那處地方更明亮。

今年，當我們準備慶祝世界真光基督的誕生，讓我們祈求祂的真光使我們衝破恐懼、焦慮、煩惱和自私，打開心扉去接受和與別人分享這道真光。當你開始感受到天主在你生命中賜給你的種種祝福，你就會成為一個滿懷喜樂、懂得感恩的人。

當我們貧困時當然沒有能力去分施。所以讓我們時常向天主祈求祝福，特別是讓我們恩寵滿溢，得著能力，透過關愛和服務別人去侍奉天主。當我們來到這個世界時，我們沒有帶來甚麼，而我們離開這世界時，亦不能帶走任何東西。對呀，救主耶穌在一個微暗的晚上，進入了這個世界，在熱鬧的白冷郡誕生，我們是藉著祂而蒙受祝福的。

親愛的朋友，天主賜給我們的每件事物都是有意義的。所以思考一下你生命的意義，細想你所擁有的，例如時間、才能、知識和金錢，運用這些事物去服務和惠澤他人，從而能夠全心全意孝愛和侍奉天主。這樣我們都成為一個福源，而自己也是蒙福的。



祝願新生的嬰孩耶穌祝福你們

Have you ever touched an electric fence? If you hold hands in a line and the first person touches the fence you can see the effect of the electricity moving down the line of people. It is like a ripple... The Ripple Effect is based on the understanding that we are all connected. Everything we do and think affects the people in our lives and their reactions in turn affect others. Each of us carries within us the capacity to change the world through small decisions.

The bible calls this process as 'blessing' and teaches us that we are blessed so that we can feel good or happy or great rather we need to bless others. Have you ever felt joy of being a blessing to others? God told to Abraham "I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous and you will be a blessing to others". Blessing isn't about naming and claiming things we believe we deserve; it's about living a Godly life and being drawn further into God's kingdom.

Most of us like to receive gifts. Because it is a great feeling to know that someone cares and consider us as special and important. Do we have the same feeling when we give gifts to others? When I was small my mother used to say that when we bless others, God takes care of the needs we are concerned about. The more you bless other people, the more God blesses your life. Yes This is what I have been experiencing since my childhood. Saint Luke tells us "give away your life, you'll find life given back, but not merely given back, - given back with bonus and blessing." (Luke 6:38). The Lord blesses us, he loves us. Because of this we can be a blessing to others. He instructs us, so we can instruct others. He comforts us so we can comfort others.

A candle loses nothing if as it lights another candle. Instead it spreads light and enables another candle to shine bright for God, thus making the place a little brighter.

This year as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Light of the world, we pray that let His light break through us, those fears, anxieties, worries, and selfishness and open our hearts to experience and share this light to others? Once you become aware of God's blessings in your life you will see how happy and grateful a person you become.

Of course we cannot give what we do not have. Therefore let us always turn to God for His blessings particularly to fill us up with His graces, energy and love to serve Him through others. We have brought nothing to the world and we cannot take anything out of the world. Yes all our blessings come through our Savior, Jesus, who entered this world one obscure night in the busy and bustling town of Bethlehem.

Dear friends, God has given us everything with a purpose. Therefore consider the purpose of all what you are and all what you have such as your time, talents, knowledge and money in serving and adding to the enrichment of others so that we are loving God and serving Him whole heartedly. In this way that we are blessed to be a blessing.

May the New born Baby Jesus bless you all.





### 抄寫聖經的靈修

善別組組員 Betty

堂區舉辦「抄寫聖經」這活動已經有一段日子。過往感覺抄寫不是一件難事，因為我一向都有抄寫文字的習慣，自己喜歡何時抄寫及怎樣抄寫也可以，所以沒有報名參加。直至去年堂區以明愛籌款為名，再次籌辦「抄寫聖經」這活動，為了支持明愛籌款，便觸發起我報名參加「抄寫聖經」之心。而今年七月培育組又再次舉辦，我也再次報名參加，希望每次的參與都會在信仰上獲得更新！

經過這兩次的「抄寫聖經」學習，我發覺原來藉著抄寫聖經，也可成為靈修的一個途徑；還有另一種體會就是「我手寫我心」。在抄寫的過程中，很容易讓整個人平靜下來，思路變得更加清晰，從而對聖經的認識和印象都會加深了，亦有更深層的領會。偶爾遇到不明白的地方，會再去查究，又會有新的領悟。

透過「抄寫聖經」這活動，與堂區大家庭內的弟兄姊妹相遇相識。只要用心去抄寫，就感受到與主相遇的奇妙恩典。適逢今年的聖週因疫情原故，未能參與實體彌撒，但透過抄寫聖週的經文，使我重新思考復活節的意義，也喚醒我在生活中要常懷感恩之心，世事在變，但跟隨主的心不變！

### 抄寫聖經……著迷

茵

抄寫，顧名思義是「抄」和「寫」。自我有認知以來不斷重複抄寫的動作，讓不懂的變成認識；讓陌生的變成熟練，從不走心，只為入腦。本無意參與「抄寫聖經」活動，但卻看見「我手寫我心」的宣傳單張後有了觸動，不自覺地報了名。因為疫情，人人往往處於防禦狀態，心身疲累，更少與自己的心靈對話！每周上網「望」彌撒，神領聖體，一切都是公式化地進行，自己也變得麻木了；情緒上也感覺得黯然無味了；心情實在壓抑難受！

然而，這次的抄經活動帶給我前所未有的驚喜，使我在濃霧中看到了一縷曙光。我清楚地記得在七月十三日下午三點，我參與林神父主持的「抄寫聖經」開啟儀式，他引導參與者「用心去默想你心中所思慮的，再抄寫經文，與之心靈合一……」。原來抄經還可以有如此奇妙的功效！當我抄寫《訓道篇》第三章1-15節時，「事事有時節，天下任何事皆有定時……但人仍不能明瞭，天主自始至終所做的工作」，我豁然開朗，終於知道我的擔心和顧慮一切都是徒勞。

自此以後，我愛上了抄經，特別是當我處於抉擇的十字路口或困惑不解時，我都會閉上眼睛去默想，然後隨意打開聖經，抄寫一段自己有感覺的章節。然後用心去感應，用手去尋找天主的啟迪；每次的抄寫都宛如與天主一起侃侃而談。

抄寫聖經真的會令人著迷，不相信嗎？誠邀你也來試試。



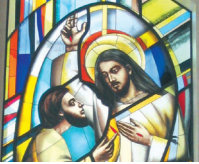
### 為亡者祈禱

請為本堂善別組(6/6/2022至30/11/2022)曾服務的亡者靈魂祈禱：

天主，我們相信祢以恩澤與仁慈對待倚恃祢的人，並以祢的憐憫收納以下弟兄姊妹，使他們安息在祢的懷中，得享天國的福樂！也讓我們因依靠祢而獲得心靈的平安。

林佩蓮 馮秀芳 李秀然 林賽蘭 鄭亮 李雪蓮  
陳宙珍 黃煥芝 郭惠英 張智恒 王柏森 陳燕屏 司徒樹池  
蘇家璇 郭維新 羅佩賢 鄭貴娣 俞華傑 周德良





## 天主對我的召喚

周阡行執事

自九月初調來青衣堂區，轉眼間已數個月了。在這段時間裡，有很多方面需要適應：搬離住了七年的修院、遷到一個陌生的社區、準備領受新的職務... 這令我想起天主對亞巴郎的召喚：「離開你的故鄉... 往我指給你的地方去。」的確，聖召的其中一個特徵，就是要離開自己的舒適圈，面對陌生的環境和挑戰。

回想起最初萌生聖召的念頭，正是為了踏出舒適圈。中六領洗後，我只是一個主日教友，彌撒後總是匆匆離去。直到大學第三年的暑假，遇到來聖堂募捐的安貧小姊妹修女。那時，我突然感到一種不知從何而來的推動力，驅使我上前詢問能否到她們的安老院做義工。之後的一個月裡，每天看著修女無私奉獻的身影，使我十分嚮往這種徹底跟隨基督的生活。於是，我開始找神父為我辨別聖召，兩年後就加入了聖神修院。

有些教友以為，我們在修院裡過著「不問世事」的隱世生活；事實上，修院每年都為我們安排一至兩個實習。若非入了修院，我的人生應該不會與基層勞工、露宿者、邊青、吸毒者、在囚人士等有任何交流。雖然這些實習確實是挑戰性十足，不時都令我感到手足無措，但藉著一次次的「冒險」，天主幫助我逐步認清祂對我的召叫，使我更有勇氣跨越自己。



接下來，我的生活將步入新的階段，開始要以執事的身份服務。雖然少不免會有碰壁、挫折的時候，但我相信天主必定親自引領。請各位兄弟姐妹也為我祈禱，求主助我繼續遵行祂所預備的道路。



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聖多默宗徒堂

St. Thomas the Apostle Church

"堂區知多啲" 問答遊戲得獎者





「給他們一個希望」——這是明愛賣物會2022的大會主題和活動目標。

因疫情關係，停辦兩年的明愛賣物會終於「重見天日」，於2022年11月20日在荃灣寶血會思源學校舉行，共有88個攤位，分別來自新界西南鐸區的聖堂、區內的中小學、明愛轄下的服務單位，濟濟一堂，共襄善舉，一齊實踐福音的訓誨：「…凡你們對我這些最小兄弟中的一個所做的，就是對我做的。」(瑪25:40) 希望藉此愛德行動，為有需要的弟兄姊妹帶來一點點希望。



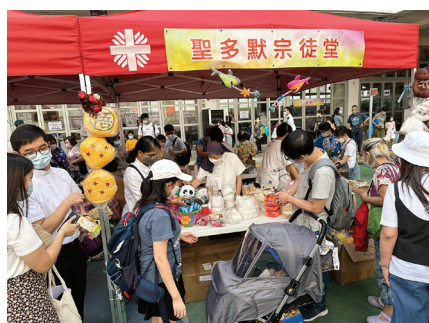
本堂主任司鐸林祖明神父在預售的開始時帶領祈禱，引用《斐理伯書》保祿宗徒的這番話：「這並不是說：我已經達到這目標，或已成為成全的人；我只願向前跑，看看是否我也能夠奪得，因為基督耶穌已奪得了我。弟兄們！我並不以為我已經奪得，我只願一件事：即忘盡我背後的，只向在我前面的奔馳，為達到目標，為爭取天主在基督耶穌內召我向上爭奪的獎品。」(斐3:12-14) 勉勵參與今次賣物會服務的弟兄姊妹，在整個服務中，全是為了彰顯天主的愛，為使有需要的弱小者，透過我們努力所籌得的款項，獲得應有的支援，這是「愛德」實踐的見證。



「眾志成城，團結就是力量」，無論是兩天的預售，或是正日的義賣，都有不少教友和慕道者參與，且非常投入，正好反映出堂區兄弟姊妹們的同心合意，猶如在同一身體上的肢體 (格前12:12)。神父、修女和修士親臨現場的落力推銷，不但為每位義工打了一口強心針，也憑着大家無私的奉獻和努力，加上教友們和街坊們的慷慨解囊，本屆所籌得的善款亦十分可觀，期望能夠秉承大會的心願，幫助有需要的、最弱小的兄弟姊妹。



「憐憫人的人是有福的，因為他們要受憐憫。」(瑪5:7) 願每位善長人翁，仍常懷那份慈悲之心，繼續為有需要的弟兄姊妹，伸出援手，使他們能過着有尊嚴和抱有希望的生活。







### 一次重新檢視自己生命的旅程

鄭國全Cosmas

不經不覺在青衣聖多默堂服務慕道團已踏入第十四個年頭，我身為慕道團導師，每次的週年避靜，都是筆者的期待，今年也沒例外。不過，是次的避靜，可以說是自己在參與講授要理的歷程中，「一次重新檢視自己生命的旅程」的好機會。

參與這次避靜的導師和陪談員，在盧伯榮神父的引導下，確實有助我們再次重新反思這份任重道遠的職務和使命——如何成為天主的「合作者」。

去年5月10日，教宗方濟各發出了一份《歷史悠久的職務》宗座牧函，重申傳道員職務早於初期教會已經存在(格前12:28-31)，且是順從聖神的行動，奉獻己身，以建樹教會。兩千年來的福傳歷史，清楚反映傳道員在傳教工作上的效果。自梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議以來，教會重新意識到平信徒參與福傳工作的重要。(參閱梵蒂岡第二屆大公會議《傳教》法令 17 號)正如耶穌復活後升天前，給眾門徒的這番話：「你們要去使萬民成為門徒，因父及子及聖神之名給他們授洗，教訓他們遵守我所吩咐你們的一切。」(瑪28:19-20)

因此，這兩天避靜中，神師引導我們透過閱讀《創世紀》十二至廿二章，再次細味亞巴郎的一生，是怎麼與上主的相遇，天主又怎麼讓人在生命中去逐漸認識祂，去經驗祂是個怎麼的天主。誠然，這也就是在整個慕道過程中，讓慕道者打破自己對神的觀念，從而認識這位唯一的真神，因而逐漸轉化慕道者，提升他們的生命，得到真正的皈依。

說到這裡，筆者腦海裡不其然地回想2008年被白修女召喚的經過和情景。原是不堪當的，天主卻願意與自己同行，這十多年來，一直不離不棄，「看！我同你們天天在一起，直到今世的終結。」(瑪28:20)。耶穌的許諾，就如亞巴郎被召選時一樣，與天主建立這份密切的關係，因而體會到「上主自會照料」(創22:8,14)。

### 傳道員職務的反省

梁燕玉Elsa

今年慕道團的退省由盧伯榮神父帶我們看一篇熟悉的聖經章節，就是創世紀12章亞巴郎，讓我們以另一角度看這個章節，天主透過亞巴郎讓我們知道，亞巴郎認識的天主是一個怎樣的天主。而我們認識的天主又是一個怎樣的天主？讓我們反思如何看到天主在生命中的臨在？

如果我們跟慕道者同行，卻不太認識天主，只是著重以聖經和知識上的傳授，卻沒有自身的信仰生活實踐，那只是說教！我們與尋找信仰的人說天主如何愛我們，耶穌如何的謙下，而自己卻沒有在生活中實踐愛，事事計較，沒有發揮團體的共融。這是我在這次退省中的反省和得著！也提醒我在團體中服務為的是光榮天主，而不是光榮自己！



### 「愛與被愛」

盧惠德

本年度傳道員避靜中，有一個環節是個人靈修，神師盧伯榮神父派給我們每一個參加者一張小咭，內有圖案及文字，讓我們利用該圖作個人反思之用。我接到的小咭是「愛與被愛」，我即時非常感動，熱淚盈眶。

的確，我自1958年小學四年級開始便投入堂區服務，由幫忙清潔，搬枱搬櫈，把學校的雨天操場改裝彌撒中心和售賣公教報，到了中學更成為堂區歌詠團和主日學的中堅份子，及至1967年便開始協助全職的慕道班導師，教授長者要理班、兒童初領聖體班和堅振道理班。大家認為我是一個「熱愛」教會的教徒。

回顧人生七十多年來，我深深感受到天主對我的慈愛和關顧，比我付出得更多。我出生的體重不足五磅，是一個早產兒，自幼多病，父母皆來自富有家庭，因戰亂家道中落，被迫在一間新開張的酒樓門前擺賣報攤營生，不幸經營不足兩個月，長兄便在報攤上，因交通意外被撞死亡，加上二兄的病逝，我的童年便在爸媽悲痛的心情下度過。自長兄去世後，我由五歲開始，便隨父母早上五時起床，六時便開始拆摺報紙開檔。小學和中學時上課前更要派發20-30份報紙給訂戶後，才可上學。幸好爸媽明白「知識」可以改變命運，讓我們姊弟七人都能接受良好的教育。童年的艱苦困難生活，培養我刻苦耐勞，凡事都努力以赴，不輕言放棄，包括信仰天主。由於信靠依賴上主，祂對我的慈惠恩澤綿綿。

天父，祢保守祝福了我，讓我六十多年緊緊跟隨祂，童年和年青時的困難和考驗，成為「化了裝的祝福」。讓我深深地體驗到「找到天主是福中之福」。

聖多默堂落成祝聖時，我們的主教胡振中樞機題字《聖詠116》\*：

備承主之惠，盛德何以償

惟願接恩杯，恆頌主名芳

勉行報主願，宣德於萬方

這首聖詠的首兩句，不但隱藏了我的名字，更提醒我要勉力傳福音，將基督的平安和喜樂傳揚出去。

\*擇自吳經熊聖詠釋義







6月18日堅振暨初領聖體



6月19日聖體會承諾禮



7月2日多默之友重宣服務承諾



7月3日「聖神、既熟悉又陌生」靈修講座



7月3日甘寶維副主教主持主保瞻禮彌撒



7月24日慶祝堂區瞻禮「堂區朝聖」活動



9月3日IT組攝影服務





9月18日  
堂區善會介紹聚會



10月2日  
寵物祝福禮



11月5日善別組承諾禮



10月15日主日學開學感恩祭



12月4日聖母無原罪傳教女修會主保瞻禮





## 重拾心情，從頭上路

林祖明神父

經歷疫情的影響，教會團體經歷無情的衝擊，因為嚴謹的防疫措施，使禮儀生活失去了團體感；家庭玫瑰經演變為網上玫瑰經，連最基本的飯聚讓人有起碼的聯繫也成為禁忌；堂區本是好地方，可使教友交流問好，也因在彌撒後不宜逗留而冷清；堂區因應政府防疫政策，在進行防疫時，或會使教友來聖堂時感到張力。這等情況，對建立團體實在背道而馳。

我們教會的特色是以禮儀為核心，教友每星期參與禮儀，我們希望藉此機會，在禮儀中創造更多空間，讓教友明白禮儀的真意，好能在禮儀與基督相遇，從而在生活中見證福音。

我們除了鼓勵教友多參與熱心敬禮外，還在堂區推動和擴展深化信仰的空間，製造更多「生命覺醒」和「信仰深化」的聚會，增強教友個人與天主間的關係，好能與基督相遇。

信仰強調「人與神」關係之外也著重「人與人」的關係，我們嘗試日後推動「小團體」的精神，藉著強化聯絡的系統，

增進戶籍間的聯繫，發揮互相支援和守望的關懷精神。讓堂區善會在工作服務和靈性成長上平衡和延續發展，使大家在付出的同時也有聖神的安慰和得著。

堂區乃天主在社區臨在有形的標記，在我們周圍有不少被大眾所忽略的人士，缺乏支援和照顧，成為另一個乞丐拉匝祿，讓我們能以天主的眼目辨識他們的存在，好能讓他們也被天主所擁抱。

最後，希望堂區終有一天能成為「眾家之家」，不是因為眾人同聲同氣，正因為意見和觀點「南轅北轍」，所以大家要學習真誠分享，提點和規勸；樂意聆聽，接納和包容；在異議中尋找聖神的面容，因為我們相信「真理之神」活在「共議同行」的團體中；這是教會的願景，亦是你、我、祂的願景。

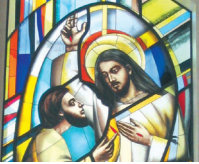
### 2022 聖誕節禮儀時間表

彌撒 Mass	日期 Date	時間 Time
聖誕節守夜彌撒 (中文)	12月24日 (星期六)	晚上七時正
聖誕節子夜彌撒 (中文)		子夜十二時正
Christmas Vigil Mass (English)	December 24 (Saturday)	9:00pm
聖誕節日間彌撒	12月25日 (主日)	按照主日各台彌撒時間
Christmas Masses	December 25 (Sunday)	According to the Sunday Masses
天主之母節前夕暨除夕謝主彌撒 (中文)	12月31日 (星期六)	晚上七時正
New Year Eve Mass (English)	December 31 (Saturday)	9:00pm

### 2023 新年禮儀時間表

彌撒 Mass	日期 Date	時間 Time
天主之母節暨新年彌撒	2023 年1月1日 (主日)	按照主日各台彌撒時間
New Year Mass (English)	January 1, 2023 (Sunday)	According to the Sunday Masses





## 新開端 New Beginnings

羅彼得神父

Rev. Peter R. Latouf, MM



將臨期是一個“新開端”的季節。在教會的行事曆中，將臨期的第一天被認為是新年的第一天。這是非常恰當的，因為這個將臨期提醒我們要做好準備。我們正在準備慶祝耶穌聖誕節，這是天主的生日。基督在聖誕節來到地球是天主奇妙計畫的最終實現，這個計畫始於世界誕生之時。記住：當世界被創造時，我們和天主之間沒有分離。天主在我們中間行走。由於天主的偉大愛和與他人分享永恒幸福的願望，祂按照自己的形象創造了人類。因為天主是仁慈的，祂從來沒有強迫我們接受這個邀請。我們被允許接受或拒絕此邀請。事實證明，我們拒絕了這一邀請。我們以為自己比天主更聰明。所以我們犯了罪，選擇了生活在一個罪惡的世界裏；一個我們“認為我們主宰自己”的世界。

但在聖誕節，天主把我們帶回了祂身邊。祂給了我們一



Advent is a season of “new beginnings”. In the calendar of the Church, the first day of Advent is considered the first day of the new year. This is very appropriate, because the Advent season reminds us to prepare. We are preparing ourselves to celebrate Christmas, which is the birthday of the Lord. Christ coming to earth at Christmas is the ultimate fulfilment of God’s amazing plan — a plan that begun when the world was created. Remember: when the world was first created, there was no separation between us and God. God walked the earth among us. Because of God’s great love and desire to share eternal happiness with others, He created human beings in His own image and likeness. Because God is kind and merciful, He never forced us to accept this invitation, however. We were allowed to accept or to reject this invitation. As it turns out, we rejected this invitation. We thought we were smarter than God. So we sinned and chose to live in a world of sin; a world that we “think” we control ourselves.

But at Christmas, God brought us back to Him. He gave us a gift — His only Son. Today, we can make the same choice once again. We can accept this gift (Jesus Christ), or we can reject the gift. The choice is ours!

As I begin my new mission as pastor of Annunciation Parish in Tsuen Wan, I also experience this choice. I was quite surprised to be appointed to this new position so quickly, but very happy and very honoured. Of course, the choice to accept this new assignment was not easy. My whole career as a priest — more than 5 years — has been at only one parish, St. Thomas the Apostle. Saying goodbye to our community is the most difficult challenge of this new assignment. However, each one of us is called to make many

份禮物——他的獨生子。今天，我們可以再次做出同樣的選擇。我們可以接受這份禮物（即是耶穌基督），也可以拒絕這份禮物。這是我們的選擇！

當我自己開始作為荃灣聖母領報堂的主任司鐸這個新使命時，我也經歷了這個選擇。我很驚訝這麼快就被任命為這個新職位，但非常高興和榮幸。當然，選擇接受這項新任務並不容易。我作為神父的整個鐸職生涯——超過5年——只在一個堂區服務——聖多默宗徒堂區。要向我們的堂區告別是這項新任務中最困難的挑戰。然而，我們每個人都需要做出許多選擇。當天主讓我們去一個新的地方時，我們願意去嗎？當天主要求我們承擔新的負擔時，我們願意承擔嗎？作為基督徒，這是我們的責任。我們永遠不知道未來會發生什麼。

所以，當我們準備在我們的教會開始新的一年，而我準備新的任務時，我們都為新的開始做準備。我們每個人都可以準備好接受天主的旨意。有時這會讓我們難過，有時這會很難接受。但是，如果我們願意接受天主給我們的禮物，特別是祂獨生子這份禮物，我們就知道我們會找到幸福！

我會一直為你們祈禱。也請你們來看我，過來打個招呼！

choices. When God asks us to go somewhere new, are we willing to go? When God asks us to bear a new burden, are we willing to bear it? As Christians, this is our responsibility. We never know what will happen in the future.

So, as we prepare to begin a new year in our Church, and I prepare for a new assignment, we all prepare for new beginnings. Each one of us can prepare ourselves to accept God’s will. Sometimes this will make us sad, and other times it will be difficult to accept. But if we are willing to accept God’s gifts to us — especially the gift of his only Son — we know that we will find happiness!

I will always keep you in my prayers. Please visit me and come say hello!







## Looking Forward to Christmas . . . The Second Coming of Jesus Christ

By: Nancy C. Mamoyac (STEC Coordinator)

December is upon us, and with that, comes the old religious tradition of Christmas. But before Christmas—a time of gift giving, celebration, and joy—there is the waiting period. This time of pause and expectation is known as Advent, and it symbolizes the anticipation of something new, something notable. Advent itself means “arrival” and it is generally celebrated in the month leading up to Christmas as a time of reflection on the Christian belief of both the birth of Jesus and His second coming – and yes, we always wish of Santa will make an appearance!

Advent itself however is celebrated in many different ways across the globe and, sometimes, isn't really recognized at all. For Catholic religions, the symbols generally associated with Advent include the lighting of candles within a wreath on consecutive Sabbath days as a sort of countdown; these candles can mean a variety of things from certain figures in the bible, to feelings associated with Christmas such as candles with HOPE, JOY, PEACE and LOVE. These special candles when lit marks the counting down of Christmas Day.

In my country the Philippines, before leading up to the birth of Jesus on Christmas eve, the “Simbáng Gabi”, which means night mass, is a series of Catholic masses in the Philippines during the nine days leading up to Christmas. Masses usually take place in the early morning between 4 am and 5 am from December 16 to December 24. Christmas Eve is marked with a special service called Misa de Gallo at the very on-set at 11:00 to 12:00 mid-night awaiting the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

After the “Missa de Gallo” (midnight mass), the most awaiting is the celebration of Christmas Eve with delicious food, songs and dancing and giving of gifts to everyone.



At night, a heartfelt and joyful songs of Christmas songs called “Carolling” also symbolizes the coming of Christmas, where singing in groups of kids and adults, joyfully singing Christmas carols in front of the house door steps. The household opens their doors giving-out “Aguinaldo”, meaning Christmas presents, after which to go to more houses and at the end there's often food or love offering, as symbol of “giving love on Christmas”. As early as month of September, Christmas carols are already heard in radios and TVs, to alarm everyone that Christmas is fast approaching.



Likewise, beautiful and colorful bright lanterns are already on display for sale along the roads and malls. Gazing at these lanterns makes one's feeling to prepare for Christmas specially decorating the house symbolizing a close and happy of family awaiting for the second coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.



My Godly greetings to all . . . “Maligayang Pasko sa lahat!” (MERRY CHRISTMAS everyone!)







## "ROSARY GATHERING Celebrated On October 23, 2022

By: Ma. Luisa Sapuan (Legion of Mary 2)

Last October 23, 2022, the Legion of Mary of St. Thomas English Community commenced the Month of Rosary by gathering devotees to pray the rosary of our Blessed Mother of Mary.



The Legion of Mary were the dedicated organizer, leading the Rosary prayer and devotees are invited to join as this rosary is a most beautiful and joyful occasion for the whole month of October. To conclude this beautiful occasion, the rosary commenced on October 23, 2022, at 2:00 - 4:00pm, the big and joyful celebration. To give special thanks and praise to our Lord Jesus for his great and infinite love for us specially by keeping us all safe and our families during the furious storm of the pandemic. To our Blessed Mother Mary for her unconditional love and continuing intercession for us to our Lord, her son.

The four mysteries of the Holy Rosary (Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful and Glorious) were fully recited, accompanied by Marian songs, the crowning of our Blessed Mother Mary as queen of heaven and earth and as the Mother of God, and Marian dance.

This joyful celebration is always cooperated and participated by the whole Parish communities, parishioners and visitors. The presence of each attendees inspired the faith of each person to fully, "TRUST IN THE LORD

COMPLETELY", and to stay at the side of our Blessed Mother Mary, our gentle mother.

So, if you are not in the habit of praying the Rosary, now is the great time to start. "No earthly or spiritual struggle is beyond our Blessed Mother's love and care." She has shown us time and again throughout history what she can and will do for those who have recourse to the Rosary.



## With Strong Heart and Faith with God

By: Elim (Agnes Lopez)

As member of the Catholic Charismatic Communities, we, as Elim dwellers continue to spread the Good News of God through live streamed gathering of praise and worship and online teachings.

Last November 5, 2022, a gathering of the Elim Missions International Conference were mostly attended by Elim servants of different branches and start-ups in the Philippines and other countries. And last November 11, 2022, the Excellence (EC22) was held and attended by all members of Elim Communities locally and Internationally. During the pandemic, our alternative action to reach-out ever Elim members is through online gatherings. Despite challenging times, we were exhorted to abide, pursue and release our faith in God. We're always excited to receive Lord's amazing touch in our gatherings with solidarity and the expectation of God's magnificent presence and blessings. Let us altogether claim Romans 4:20, that says,

"He grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God."

Faith strong, brothers and sisters in Christ. "Kapit kamay at kapit bisig para kay Jesus.

Elim Community\_December 2022-2023







## STEC Pilgrimage at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel (Tai O) on September 12, 2022.

There was a church building at this location around 1923 but it was not designated as a church. The building was then destroyed by typhoon. After being redeveloped in 1937, it was designated as a church and renamed Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel, belonging to the Cheung Chau Parish and operated by the Fatima Church.

In 1965, Tai O Church and Cheung Chau Church were separately designated as independent parishes. In 1966, it was renamed Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church and erected to parish status on 1.7.1979. It was then put under the purview of Epiphany Parish of Mui Woo on 8.9.1980.



The graduates of the "Bible Study" Course, ready to increase our faith to love God's life through Bible Study and sharing.