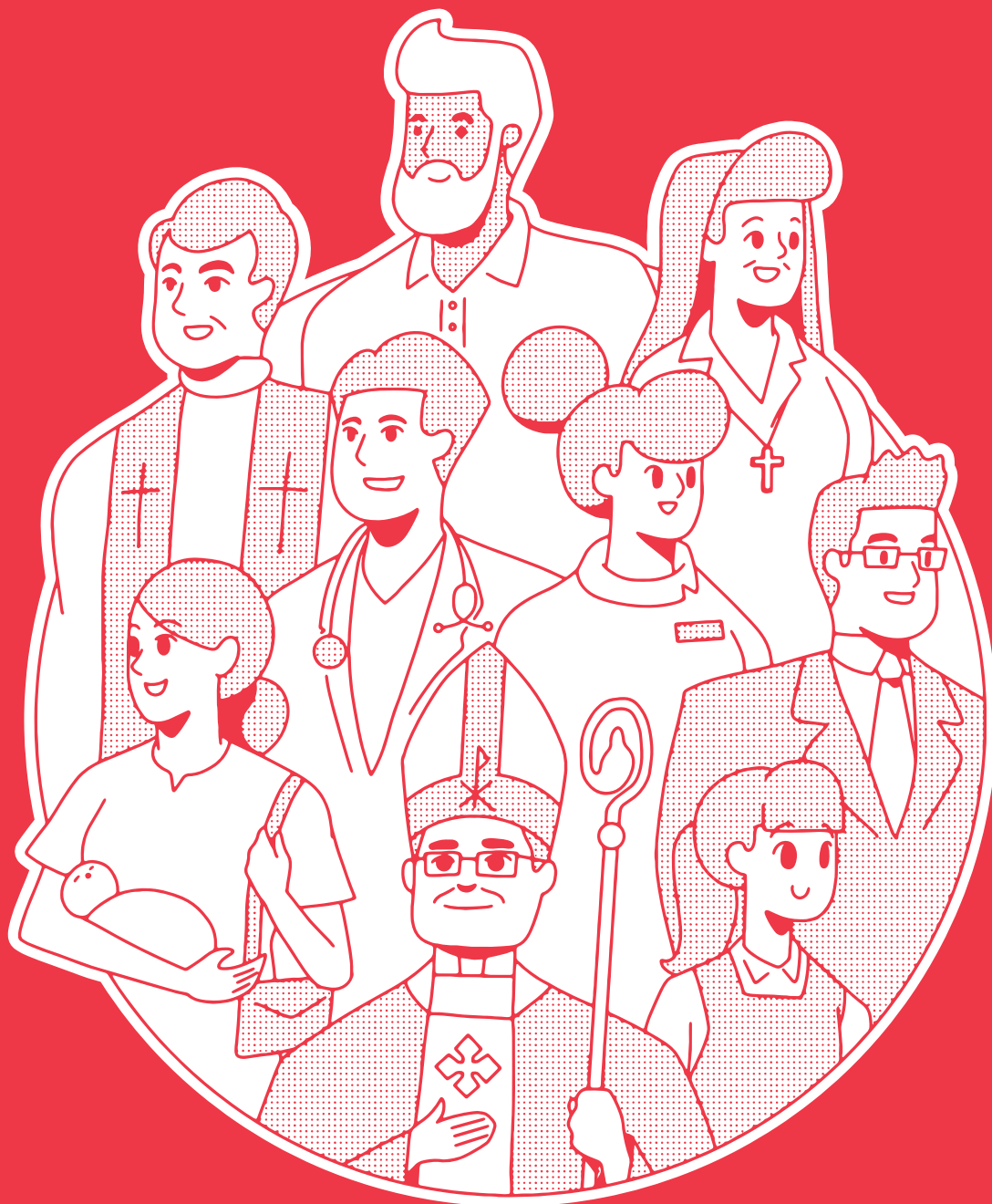


CATHOLIC 2020 SG DISCERNMENT EXERCISE



by Archbishop William Goh

PURPOSE

Our Catholic Church in Singapore is celebrating its 200th anniversary. In this pivotal year we invite all Catholics to contemplate the past with gratitude, reflect on the role of our faith in the present situation of the Church, and discern how we can best respond to the Call of God to be a more vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church.

This personal or small group discernment exercise provides some pointers for us to reflect on how we have been the beacons of light that we are called to be for our families, our Church, our society and the world, as we allow the Holy Spirit to stir our hearts and to re-ignite the faith that has been passed to us down the generations.

HOW TO CARRY OUT THE EXERCISE

- Choose a quiet spot, with a crucifix, and preferably light the candle on your altar.
- Make the Sign of the Cross; enter into the Presence of the Lord with a silent pause for 5 minutes.
- You may like to play sacred music to help you enter into a moment of sacred silence.
- Then read the Prayer for Catholic200SG and the selected scripture passages slowly, pausing at different moments for reflection and action.

PART ONE

Gratitude



Prayer: Heavenly Father, Your Son commissioned His apostles to bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Our founding missionaries left home and country so that we in Singapore may receive the Good News and Your loving salvation. Thank you for this gift of faith, and for all those who laboured to keep it alive and burning these two hundred years.



Scripture Readings: **2 Tim 1:3-9; Mt 28:16-20**

(Choose a portion from these readings, or whichever word or idea that strikes you, pause to reflect, savour and taste the Word of God).



Reflection and Action:

Consider the sacrifices of the foreign missionaries in their zeal to save souls and bring the Gospel to us. How have we shown our gratitude by building up the local church? Think for a moment, how did you encounter God or were struck by the Good News you had heard? Visualise that moment. Who were the persons in your life who were instrumental in giving you the faith? Say a prayer of thanks for them. Even better, send them a message after this exercise through text messaging or email.

PART TWO

Christianity on Trial



Prayer: Lord Jesus, our faith is in danger of becoming irrelevant because of secularism, materialism, individualism, and relativism. Grant our communities a renewed missionary zeal and courage to proclaim Your name and Lordship.



Scripture Readings: Rom 1:18-32; Mt 4:1-11



Reflection and Action:

How has your faith been affected by secularism, materialism, individualism and relativism? How is Jesus the Lord of your life, in your lifestyle, in your moral decisions and in your works of charity? What prevents you from sharing the truth and the universal values of the gospel with your friends and the society at large? Visualise those moments of temptation and challenges. Write down your challenges and pray for God's strength to overcome them with courage.

PART THREE

Call of Faith



Prayer: Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, to renew Your people with the conviction and courage of our early missionaries. Rekindle our faith so that we can be beacons of light in a world darkened by sin, hopelessness, and ignorance. Protect us from the snares of the evil one and grant us the grace to remain faithful to You.



Scripture Readings: **1 Pt 3:13-17; Mt 5:13-16**



Reflection and Action:

Visualise how much difficulties the early missionaries must have faced - being alone, and few in number - thousands of miles away from home. What gave them the impetus and zeal to sacrifice their life, family, security and comfort to go to a foreign land to proclaim the Good News? What sacrifices have you made for the spread of the gospel? Reflect on the moments when you felt alone and afraid to share the faith. Write down those moments when you shied from testifying to the faith, then ask for the courage to witness to Christ.

PART FOUR

Renewing Our Environments



Prayer: May our families be models of love and unity; our workplaces be sanctuaries for justice and integrity; truth and charity be taught in our classrooms; parishes live out their mission in communion; the poor, sick, and abandoned see the face of God in us, and may peace and harmony reign among peoples of every race, language and religion in our land.



Scripture Readings: Col 3:12-24; Mt 25:31-46



Reflection and Action:

How have you promoted communion and unity in your family, community and workplace? Have you been a cause of disunity by your ambition, selfishness, pride and insensitivity to the feelings of others? How are you supporting the archdiocesan and parish mission and vision for our Catholic community? Visualise how Jesus is calling you to renew your family, workplaces, schools, parish, the poor, the lost, and the abandoned. Reflect on your different involvements in your personal and parish life. Write down concrete steps on how you can be the first to renew your environment. Commit to one or two personal actions you can take as part of this year of faith.

PART FIVE

Turning to Mary as our Role-Model in Faith



Prayer: Blessed Mother, you were the first disciple and evangeliser to announce Jesus as Saviour to the world. Intercede and grant us your maternal guidance and protection as we navigate the uncertain future.



Scripture Readings: Acts 1: 12-14; 2:1-4; Luke 1:39-45



Reflection and Action:

What is the role of Mary in your spiritual life? How can you cultivate an authentic Marian Spirituality to help you know Our Lord better so that you can imitate her and become His witness to a vibrant and evangelising faith?

How would you imitate Mary in bringing Christ to others? Mary was a Christ-bearer by carrying Jesus in her heart and not merely in her womb. She is a model of one who brings Jesus to others, not by words but by her charity, and her sensitivity to the needs of others, as when she rushed to visit Elizabeth in her old age and advanced stage of pregnancy, and when she helped the Wedding Couple at Cana in Galilee, unknown to them and without their asking, and she did all these without seeking recognition for herself. Most of all, she uttered no words of resentment or anger against the enemies of her Son but simply stood by the foot of His Cross, supporting Him as He hung there. Would you do the same in your daily life, in your family, at the workplace and in your community?

Recapitulation



Prayer: Father, may Your love and grace ignite our hearts and lead us to launch a new era of faith, so that once again we may be a more vibrant, evangelising and missionary Church. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.



Reflection and Action:

Recollect and open the online form. Record your reflections and commitment to faith. Reflect on what the Holy Spirit may have prompted you, input your suggestions for the renewal of the Church in the aspects of personal formation, family life, workplace, parish life, social mission and impact in Singapore at large.

SUBMIT YOUR IDEAS
AND THOUGHTS:



