

HOPE

N e w s l e t t e r



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Your WILL Be Done
(Matthew 6:10)

MOTHER'S TRUST

Our Blessed Lady, Pray For Us

MISSION IN ASIA

Journeying Together in FABC 50

SEEKERS

Saints, Sharing & Life Directions

SHEPHERDS

Saying Yes to His Call

Photo from **Seton Shrine**

Design by **Vanessa Newn**

Not my will, but the will of the One who sent me

(John 6:38-40)

To do the Father's Will, we look not to the greats in human history, but to a humble teenage girl in Nazareth. From Mary's simple Yes, the world now calls her Blessed, fulfilling her role in carrying, delivering and raising the Son our Saviour.

The Holy Father's message at the Medjugorje Youth Festival early this month reinforces the call to seek peace, by following Mary's example to where Jesus dwells in our hearts. Our very own Apostolic Vicariate of Brunei also echoes this call in a devotion to Maria, Kumang Serega Enggau Dunya (Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth), featured in honour of the Queenship feast day this 22 August.

On this same day, we had the privilege to virtually join the inauguration of the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Federation of Asian Bishops Conference (FABC-50).

In taking up our crosses and walking the way of the Lord, we also look to Saints (featured in our monthly Youth Time Out Sessions), as well as sharing from three of our COOL parishioners on how their life directions have changed beyond their original plans and expectations.

Despite the challenges, what a gift it is for them, and for us, to follow the Lord's roadmap and discover His rewards!

Also in this month, we had the great occasion to celebrate the 23rd and 19th sacerdotal anniversaries of Rev Fr Paul Shie and Rev Fr Robert Leong, respectively. Their choice to say "yes" in the footsteps of Mary and the apostles, demonstrate and invite more of us to the vocation call, surrendering our lives to follow the Lord and serving others wholeheartedly.

Lastly, let us learn to more fully entrust ourselves, our families, our plans and wills, our hearts, joys and sorrows to the Divine Mercy who knows and loves each of us best. Jesus, I trust in You.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.
(Proverbs 3:5-6)

Emilian H
Social Communications Editor
Church of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception,
Seria



Maria Kumang Serega enggau Dunya,
Sembiang ka Kami!

Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth,
pray for us!

Maria Dara Tuchi, ingat olih nuan samoa orang ti mintaibun nuan, ti minta tulong nuan, ti minta sembiang nuan, enda kala lebu, keba aku andalka pementas nuan, lalu minta nuan malik asoh aku, orang ti jai. Aku ka ngagai nuan Indai aku, ti Tuchi Ari Semo, lalu madahka penyalah diri di moa nuan enggau ati nesal lalu minta nuan ngambu aku ka anak, ngambi nuan mai aku ila niki ka menoa serega. O Indai Tuhan Jesus, anang enda ninga ka sembiang aku, lalu beri utai ti dipinta aku. Amin.

O Holy Virgin Mary, remember us who seek your care, implore your help, ask for your intercession. Unceasingly in your mercy I trust as I plead for you watch over me, a sinner. To you I approach, my Mother Most Holy, as I pour out my sins in repentance, look upon me as your child and lead me in time to the heavenly kingdom. O Mother of my Lord Jesus, despise not my prayer but hear me and grant my petitions. Amen.



Unveiling of **Maria Kumang Serega Enggau Dunya**, on the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Bandar Seri Begawan on 15 August 2019.

Photo by Leny Baylon Tanquerido

ICONOGRAPHY

Adopted as a local version of Madonna and Child, the Blessed Virgin is depicted as holding Jesus in her arms while wearing a red and gold *ngepan indu* which symbolizes the sun, a *sugu* crown of twelve stars on her head and a crescent beneath her feet, all as referenced in the Book of Revelations.

The base bears Our Lady's title in Iban, translated as "Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth".

CULTURAL INTERPRETATION

The icon of Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth is dressed in *ngepan indu* (a traditional ceremonial costume for Iban women), consisting of *kain kebat* skirt (handwoven with gold thread), *rawai tinggi betating pirak* (corset or bodice) with *marek empang* a beaded collar or overlay.

The ensemble also includes a set of Iban traditional silver accessories consisting of a crown or comb known as *sugu*, earrings and necklace, *pirak tumpak* (bangles), *sementing ringgit* (a belt of dangling coins), *lampit* (belt), *geruncung* (anklets) and *buah pauh* (purse).

The *kalambi* worn by the Child Jesus is an embroidered shirt for Iban men.

QUEENSHIP OF MARY

There appeared a great sign in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. (Rev 12:1)

The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mother as Queen of Heaven and Earth is commemorated as the fifth Glorious Mystery of the Holy Rosary, and celebrated as a Catholic Memorial on 22 August annually. Yet do we really understand why is Mary crowned as Queen?

Biblical Old Testament tradition of "gebirah" (translated as Great Lady) where the mother of the king, not his wife (or wives) is honoured as the Queen and seated next to the King. Theologian Scott Hahn explained the role of the Queen Mother, "she was revered and honoured uniquely by the King, she interceded to the King on behalf of his subjects, and the King honours her requests."

Pope Pius XII explained that as "Jesus is King throughout all eternity by nature and by right of conquest: through Him, with Him, and subordinate to Him, Mary is Queen by grace, by divine relationship, by right of conquest, and by singular choice [of the Father]."

- 1. Queen by grace and by divine choice**
From her Immaculate Conception, Mary was rendered without sin and chosen by God to be the new Tabernacle and Ark of the Covenant, "full of grace, blessed among women" to carry and raise His Son, the Messiah of prophecy.
- 2. Queen by divine relationship**
Of her own free will, Mary accepted her role as Mother of God the Son at the Annunciation. She was addressed as "Mother of My Lord" by Elizabeth, inspired by the Spirit during the Visitation (Lk 1:43), Jesus listened to her during the Wedding at Cana (Jn 2:4) and entrusted her to John at the foot of the cross (Jn 19:26-27).
- 3. Queen by right of conquest**
Mary was named as the new Eve, the woman who defeated Satan by giving birth to the one who crushed the head of the serpent (Gen 3:15). She also shared in Christ's mission for humanity's redemption, salvation and grace.

Simply put, Mary is Queen of Heaven, (reigning over the Angels and Saints) and she is Queen of Earth because she is our Mother, yours and mine.



The Holy Father's Message

to the Participants of the Medjugorje International Youth Festival
on 2 August 2022

Live like Christ, trust like Mary.

Beloved, do not be afraid. Go to Him with all that you are carrying within your heart. He is the only Lord who offers true refreshment and true peace. Follow the example of Mary, his and our Mother, who will lead you to Him

Entrust yourselves to the *Stella Maris*, a sign of

hope on the rough seas, who guides us towards the harbor of peace. She, who knows her Son, will help you to imitate him in your relationship with God the Father, in compassion for your neighbor, and in the awareness of what we are called to be, children of God.

**“Be it
unto me
according
to Thy
Word.”**

(Luke 1:38)

Love and Peace

The Lord knows how difficult life can be and that there are many things that strain our hearts: many disappointments, various wounds from the past, burdens that we carry and injustices we bear, many uncertainties and worries.

Jesus tells us, “Come to me and learn from me, you will find peace.” (Mt 11: 28-30). This is an invitation to move, not to stand still, frozen and afraid before life, and to rely on Him.

It sounds easy, but in dark moments it becomes natural to close-in on ourselves. Instead, Jesus wants to pull us out, so He says, ‘Come.’ The way out is via relationship, in looking up to the One who truly loves us.

At this moment, in the heart of summer, the Lord invites you to take a vacation with him in the most special place there is — your heart.

My dear young people, I encourage you to become Jesus' disciples and heirs of His promise of peace. By doing so, you will discover God's will for them, and the "yoke" of which Jesus speaks is the law of love, the commandment he left to his disciples: love one another, as I have loved you (Jn. 15:12). For the true remedy for humanity's wounds is a way of life based on love for one another, rooted in the love of God.

Journeying Together As Peoples of Asia



Theme Song : Song of Asia—Bless Our God Who Walks With Us

In 1970, on the occasion of Pope Paul VI's visit to Manila (November 28 – 30), the Asian bishops came together for the first time. From that meeting flowed the desire to strengthen the collegiality among them and a need to define and articulate what it means to be 'Church in Asia' in the spirit of Vatican II. This, then, gave birth to the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conference - FABC.

The FABC is made up of episcopal conferences of South, Southeast, East and Central Asia, established with approval of the Holy See. Its purpose is to foster among its members solidarity and co-responsibility for the welfare of the Church and society in Asia, and to promote and defend whatever is for the greater good.

Invoking the intercession of Mary, Queen of Heaven, the FABC 50th Anniversary Celebrations is inaugurated on 22 August 2022, to be followed by a General Conference to discern and discuss new pathways of service as well as mission and structure for the Church in Asia, from 12 to 30 October 2022 in Bangkok, Thailand.

Prayer for FABC 50

Blessed are you Father who in your great love, sent your Only Begotten Son to reconcile us to you and to one another by his Passion, Death, and Resurrection and the power of the Holy Spirit.

We thank and praise you for the birth of FABC over fifty years ago. By divine providence and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Bishops from Asia met and formed the FABC. May the FABC continue to be steadfast in its mission of love and service for your beloved people in this vast continent of Asia.

Help us to surmount the challenges that threaten the stability of our families, the dreams of our youth, the integrity of our environment, and the harmony among peoples, cultures and religions.

Through the intercession and motherly protection of Mary, Mother of the Church, and Star of the New Evangelization, may this occasion of the 50th anniversary celebration of FABC be a propitious time to discern and undertake new pathways for genuine renewal in our mission of making the Gospel alive and life-giving: for the poor, deprived and marginalized, for the displaced and the migrants, and for mother earth who groans with wounds of exploitation.

We make this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

DOA UNTUK FABC 50

Terberkatilah Engkau ya Bapa kerana atas Cintakasih-Mu yang besar, telah mengutus Anak-Mu untuk memperdamaikan kami dengan Engkau dan dengan sesama kami melalui Kesengsaraan, Kematian dan Kebangkitan-Nya atas kuasa Roh Kudus.

Kami bersyukur dan berterima kasih kepada-Mu atas kewujudan Persekutuan Persidangan Para Uskup di Asia ini, sejak 50 tahun yang lalu. Dengan ketentuan Ilahi dan atas bimbingan Roh Kudus, Para Uskup di Asia telah bertemu dan telah membentuk Persekutuan Persidangan ini. Semoga Persekutuan Persidangan ini senantiasa tabah dalam Misi pelayanan dan kasih untuk semua orang yang Engkau kasihi di Benua Asia yang luas ini.

Bantulah kami untuk mengatasi segala cabaran yang mengancam kestabilan keluarga kami, impian para muda-mudi kami, integriti persekitaran kami, dan keharmonian sesama manusia serta kebudayaan dan agama. Melalui perantaraan dan perlindungan Ibu Gereja kami, yakni Bunda Maria dan Bintang bagi Penginjilan Baru, semoga perayaan ulangtahun yang ke- 50 ini, menjadi masa yang sesuai untuk mengamati dan mengaturi langkah yang baru dalam memperbaharui misi kami, menjadikan Injil itu benar-benar hidup dan memberi kehidupan terutama: kepada yang miskin, yang terlantar dan dipinggirkan, pelarian dan pendatang, dan bumi yang sedang meraung kesakitan akibat eksploitasi.

Kami berdoa semua ini melalui Putera-Mu Tuhan kami Yesus Kristus, yang hidup dan bertakhta bersama Engkau dan Roh Kudus, Tuhan, sepanjang segala masa. Amen.

亞洲主教團協會五十周年祈禱文

聖父,你當受讚美。你以你偉大的愛情,派遣你的唯一聖子,他以苦難、死亡和復活,以及聖神的德能,使我們與你和好如初,又使我們彼此和好。

為亞洲主教團協會誕生五十年,我們感謝你,讚美你。由於你上智的安排,及聖神的帶領,使來自亞洲的主教相聚並成立亞洲主教團協會。求你使亞洲主教團協會繼往開來,在遼闊的亞洲,為你所深愛的人民,堅定不移地踐行愛德和服務的使命。

求你幫助我們跨越各種挑戰,以維護家庭穩定,使青年滿懷抱負,並保護環境、民族、文化及宗教之間的和諧。我們仰賴新福傳之星、瑪利亞天主之母的轉求和庇護,祈願亞洲主教團協會慶祝五十周年的好時機,激勵我們辨別新路徑,更新我們的使命,好能向窮苦者、被欺凌和邊緣化的人、流離失所及移居他鄉的人、飽受蹂躪的大地母親,傳告那充滿活力並賦予生命的福音喜訊。

因你的聖子、我們的主耶穌基督,他和你及聖神,是唯一天主,永生永王。
亞孟。

香港教區禮儀委員會譯

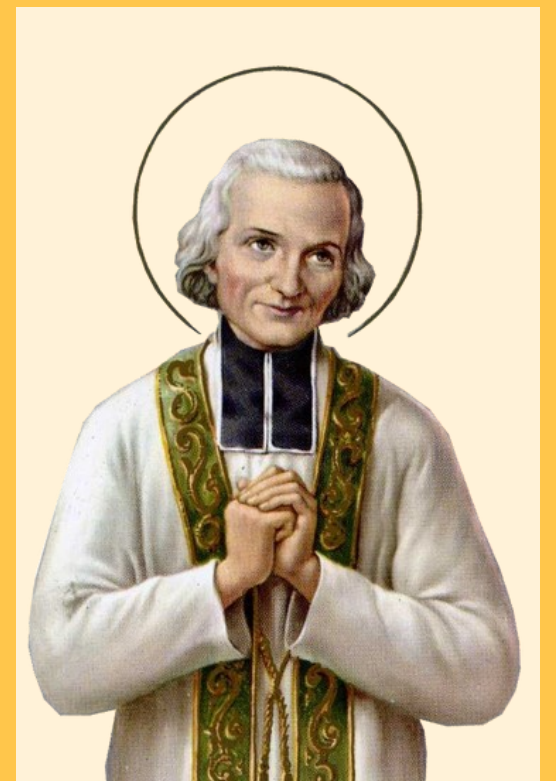
Fr Paul's 23rd Sacerdotal Anniversary



The priesthood is the love of the Heart
of Jesus. The priest is not a priest for
himself, he is for YOU.

St John Mary Vianney, Cure of Ars,
Patron Saint of All Priests

Feast Day : 4th August



Saint John Vianney,

Your childhood dream was to be a Priest, to win souls for God. You endured years of toil and humiliation to attain the Priesthood. You became a priest truly after God's own heart, totally devoted to the service of God's people. The Church has exalted you as model priest and patron of all parish priests. Pray that God may give to His Church today, many more priests after His own Heart.

Pray for all the priests under your patronage, that they may be worthy representatives of Christ the Good Shepherd. May they wholeheartedly devote themselves to prayer and penance; be examples of humility and poverty and shining models of holiness. May their loving devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist and to Mary His Mother be the Twin Fountains of fruitfulness for their ministry.
Amen.





Fr Robert's 19th Sacerdotal Anniversary

The Organizing Committee would like to convey sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed directly and indirectly to the success of the fundraising event; Guests, Sponsors, Performers, Logistics Teams, Catering Teams, and many more.
Thank you and God bless.

Time Out with God : Masterpiece

Carlo Acutis

He was a typical teenager who loved eating pizza, playing soccer, making home videos of his pets, drawing comics, cyber gaming and computer programming.

Coming from an inactive Catholic family, he somehow developed a deep love for the Eucharist and Mother Mary. It was said he never missed daily Mass and reciting the rosary everyday since receiving his first Holy Communion at the age of 7.

Translating faith into action, he notably involved himself in volunteering in charity works, maintaining church websites and even created an online Eucharist Miracles Showcase.



Dying of leukemia at the age of 15 in year 2006, he was buried in Assisi.

In 2020, Blessed Carlo Acutis was beatified by the Holy Father, who declared him as a "Servant of God". His feast day is on 12 October.

Who am I?

Often we struggle to define our identity in our own eyes, and in the eyes of our families, friends and even strangers. How about our identity in God's eyes? We reflected on the wise words of Blessed Carlo Acutis, **"Not me, but God. Find God, and you will find the meaning of your life."**



On the first Sundays of July and August 2022, COOL Youth had Time Out sessions to discover their identities and career paths for their personalities. They also reflected on trusting God's Will in changing life directions and situations.

For we are God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)





Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton

TRUSTING ALL TO HIS WILL

Let Us Pray

Oh Father, the first rule our dear Savior's life
was to do Your Will.

Let His Will of the present moment be the first
rule of our daily life and work, with no other
desire but for its most full and complete
accomplishment.

Help us to follow it faithfully, so that doing
what You wish, we will be pleasing to You.
Amen.

Prayer by St Elizabeth Ann Seton

Daughter of a surgeon in
a wealthy American
Protestant family,
Elizabeth Ann excelled in
English, French, music
and horsemanship

Married a young,
handsome, wealthy
Protestant business heir,
she focused on raising
her children and nursing
the sick and dying among
family, friends, and needy
neighbors.

To support her family
financially, Elizabeth Ann
started a school for girls
in the US, but her friends
and family shunned her
for converting to the
Catholic faith.

Suffering from societal
pressure, interpersonal
conflicts, as well as the
deaths of loved ones ,
Elizabeth Ann
persevered to start and
build the religious
congregation of the
Sisters of Charity of St.
Joseph's, which is still
active in its ministry till
today.

Her mother died when
she was 3. She was raised
by her loving stepmother,
but during her parents'
divorce, her father left for
further studies overseas
and she was sent to live
with her uncle's family.

Her husband lost his
fortune and she moved
her family to her father's
house. Later her father
died, and her husband
also died in Italy while
seeking treatment.
There, Elizabeth Ann,
was introduced to the
Catholic faith.

She was about to give up
and migrate to Canada
when a priest (who was
the first US Catholic
seminary principal)
invited her to start a
school for poor Catholic
children.

Elizabeth Ann Seton is
canonized as the first
American-born Catholic
saint. Her feast day is on
January 4.

60 Years with Legion of Mary

Seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33)

by Anthony Tshai

When I joined the Legion of Mary (LOM) and our then COOL Rector Fr Leo Barry on February 27, 1962, I was told that I could stay for two years! Why two years?

Not in the LOM handbook but for economic reasons. During the time, the onshore oil production in Seria was almost exhausted, so unless new fields were discovered, Brunei Shell Petroleum (BSP) was considering moving on to other fields overseas.

Leaving it all to the Lord, I started to learn as much as I can from LOM. After my two years in Seria, I decided I would return to Kuching. I even planned to start a presidium there while building a new life as a rubber tapper in my father's footsteps!

Then in 1963-1964, new oilfields were discovered offshore in the Ampa, Champion and Fairley, and I took the opportunity to extend my work here.

By late sixties, Brunei had acquired its own Single Buoy Mooring (SBM) and constructed the huge Seria Terminal tank farm to handle the increase of oil production. So instead of retrenching staff, BSP hired more staff which saw Filipinos joining our team for first time.

As for me, instead of only two years, I find I have spent the past 60 years in COOL LOM and still going on strong, forfeiting my plan as a rubber tapper!

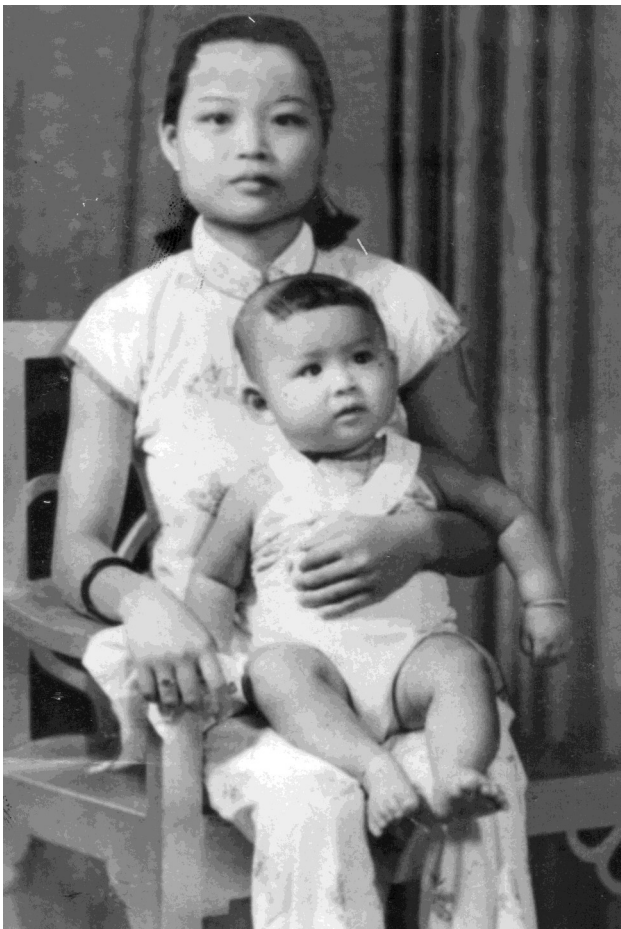


Photo of Anthony Tshai, as a baby with his mother

Never Stop Praying

For I know the plans for you, ... a future and a hope. (Jeremiah 29:11)

by Monica Masol

I used to be a workaholic. As a chef on 24-hour shifts at various places, I spent most of the time at work, sometimes leaving home at 3.30 am, and in between, I had to send or pick up my children from their school or extra classes. I barely had time with my family, I was so exhausted at times that I had to stop my car while driving and napped for a few minutes, at St Angela's School carpark, at the Anduki Muslim cemetery.....

As the years passed, my work situation became so bad that I was stressed, burned out and forgetful. There were a few times I forgot the fire on the stove and almost caused fire hazards! Finally I knew I couldn't do it anymore, and left to explore other work in landscaping, cleaning and employment agencies.

The pandemic hit me hard. Grief-stricken with the passing of my beloved father, I also lost my job and was unemployed for about a year. Though I

applied everywhere, my age was not in my favour. Staying alone at home with my sons at work and in university, I was lonely and was prone to overthinking, resorting to talking to my dog and cat, of course they could not answer me!

Praise God, I finally opened up and talked to our parish leaders and priest, who advised me to practice patience and perseverance in prayer. I continued my prayers until a miracle happened, I got a new job with a Catholic boss who is supportive of elderly workers even until their late sixties! I also finally have work-life balance, with time with my family, time to join parish

ministries and activities, time to rest, and most importantly, time with God.

After years of struggling, I finally find peace in the right job that I can do well in and support my family financially. I am not chasing money or position anymore. The Lord knows and gives me what suits me best in terms of my priorities, skills and interests.

My next challenge is to guide my two sons to the Lord and a faithful life. I thank the Lord for teaching me to focus not so much on the problem, but the miraculous solution He knows is best for me. As long as we believe in Him, He will answer us in some way one day. I wait and hope!



Photo of Monica Masol with her husband

In everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

In the fifth year of my job, I was feeling stuck, stagnant and lost. Matters came to a point where I was demoted and my bosses were openly considering to replace me. As my family breadwinner, I feared for my family financials. I doubted my skills, my confidence was at an all time low. To make the matters worse, as a foreigner, I could not easily find another job of similar pay that would sustain my family expenses and commitments.

That was when I started finding jobs in my home country, applying and sending my resumes to any suitable vacancy. This didn't come lightly, considering that if this materialized, I would have to leave my young family here in Brunei and see them only once a month. But my wife, bless her, understood and supported my decision.

An interview offer came. I was excited and half-confident of securing the position. Before flying to the interview, I attended a Mass in COOL, sitting at the last pew facing the Blessed Mother, praying for the Lord's direction and strength for what I thought would be the start of my next phase in life. Suddenly, during the Mass reading, I heard a clear unmistakable voice in my heart, "Don't go." Needless to say, I got a shock but I shook

it off as my imagination. The voice came again, "Stay here, you are needed here."

I wish I could say I obediently heeded the call, but being human, I went to the interview anyway and they promised a response in a month's time. Then the pandemic struck, hitting the industry hard and the position did not materialize.

Back in Brunei a few months after, as I patiently accepted my reduced role and also volunteering for opportunities at work that others rejected, I somehow received a miraculous news, I was to be transferred to a new department with an exciting project opportunity. Six months later, by the grace of God, I was happily confirmed into my new position with a new career growth path.

I realize now that all these could only happen with perseverance in the Lord's promise. The only way I can honour His trust and stewardship is to love and serve Him, both through my job at work and my service to His Church and community.

What do you do when you feel rudderless and unsure about your direction? How can we figure out God's will?

1. Ask for revelation

You do not have because you do not ask God (James 4:2b). So when it comes to wisdom, we need to ask God. And if we don't have the wisdom we seek, we need to examine how seriously we've pursued an answer. Are we continuing to ask, seek, and knock? God is our very first stop when we're looking for direction.

2. Encourage feedback

Hopefully every Christian has a community of believers who support and encourage them. We rely on the informed guidance of people who love God and know us well. And we need trusted people who will seek the Lord on our behalf and can offer us helpful feedback.

Godly counsel doesn't replace seeking the Lord's will on our own, but it's a critically important supplement. If you feel directionless, don't keep it to yourself. Look to your community for help.

3. Do what you know to be right

Sometimes we have a wrong idea about how much guidance people received from God. Abraham's story started with God instructing him to leave his home and family without any clarity (Genesis 12:1). And like many biblical heroes, God doled out information on a need-to-know basis.

Scripture is clear about the kinds of attitudes and behaviors that God expects from His people. And in lieu of clarity, we can go about our day-to-day business learning to be the kind of people God called us to be. Through these simple acts of obedience, we often discover God's will.

4. Start saying yes to opportunities

Remember when you didn't want to try a new type of food and your parents would say, "How do you know you don't like it unless you try it?" On some level, all of life is like that. One of the things we find so attractive about identifying God's will is that it instantly weeds out all the other options, which makes life so much easier. But what if God wants us to have new and revelatory experiences?

If we're not entirely sure what we should be doing, let's take advantage of other options. Let's say yes to volunteer, ministry, and service opportunities. Let's be open to new experiences. It might be in them that God chooses to speak to us.

Learning to trust God when we don't entirely know what's next is critical. It builds our faith and our confidence. And once we know what God desires from us, it will make it a lot easier to follow through when the path isn't clear or as we encounter resistance.

Discover Your Vocation

To ask for the Father's Will, to follow the Son's Way, to say "yes" to the Spirit's Work.

Lord, my God and my loving Father, you have made me to know you, to love you, to serve you, and thereby to find and to fulfill my deepest longings. I know that you are in all things, and that every path can lead me to you.

But of them all, there is one especially by which you want me to come to you. Since I will do what you want of me, I pray you, send your Holy Spirit to me: into my mind, to show me what you want of me; into my heart, to give me the determination to do it, and to do it with all my love, with all my mind, and with all of my strength right to the end. Jesus, I trust in you. Amen.

Prayer for Vocations Day, 3 July 2022

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