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# HOPE

N e w s l e t t e r

“His mercy is from age to age” – Luke 1: 50

## CHILDLIKE HEARTS

The Holy Father Speak

## SHEPHERDS OF THE SYNOD

Regional Bishops Conference

## BLESSED TREASURE

The Gift of Grandparents and Elderly

## COMMUNITY OF DIVERSITY

Gawai, St Therese and More

## YOUTH SNAPSHOTS

Vicariate Youth Day, Sunday School & Retreats

Cover by Jeronimo Ezquerro

Design by Vanessa Newn





## Lately I have become a Thomas.

Bad news after bad news, never-ceasing challenges and worries, I am overwhelmed and exhausted, doubting what am I doing everything for. But three readings in Sunday Mass this July tell me God is here, He is in control and He is calling me to :

### REST

**“Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11)**

Worn down and worn out by the world, I can only lift my many fears, anxieties and struggles, all to Him. Like Thomas, it’s not God who is far from me, it’s I walling up myself from hurt and from Him, refusing His mercy. My heart is seeking something it couldn’t find, not realising it is actually Someone it is yearning to.

### RETURN

**“Lord, you are good and forgiving. Turn toward me, and have pity on me; give your strength to your servant.” (Psalm 86)**

I am encouraged by the writing of the Holy Father on this: Maybe someone among us here is thinking, My sin is so great, I am as far from God. I don’t have the courage to go back, to believe that God can welcome me and that he is waiting for me, of all people. But God is indeed waiting for you; he asks of you only the courage to go to him. For God, we are not numbers, we are important; indeed we are the most important thing to him. Even if we are sinners, we are what is closest to his heart.

### RESET

**“You have hidden these things from the wise and the learned, you have revealed them to the childlike.” (Matthew 11)**

My world view has led me to tend to overthink, to put “me” rather than “Him” and “them” as the center of my life. I pray to regain the childlike wonder, to see joy and love with His eyes, to heal with His grace, depend on His strength. More importantly, I need to change, to be good soil to grow the seeds of His Word well, by loving our grandparents and elderly, our youth, our shepherds, our community and above all, God.

Lord, help my unbelief, lead me home to You!

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## Angelus Message of Pope Francis on Sunday, 9 July 2023

**T**he message, is clear: God reveals himself by liberating and healing the human person. Let us not forget this: God reveals himself by liberating and healing the human person, and he does this with a gratuitous love, a love that saves.

This is why Jesus praises his Father, because his greatness consists in love and he never works outside of love. But this greatness in love is not understood by those who presume to be great and who fabricate a god in their own image — powerful, inflexible, vindictive. In other words, those who are presumptuous are not able to accept God as Father; those who are full of themselves, proud, concerned only about their own interests — these are the presumptuous ones — convinced they do

not need anyone. They did not know how to welcome the great things of God.

The little children, instead, know how to welcome them, and Jesus praises the Father for them: “I bless you,” he says, because you have revealed the Kingdom of Heaven to the little ones. Jesus praises him for the simple people whose hearts are free from presumption and self-love. The little ones are those who, like children, feel their need and are not self-sufficient. They are open to God and allow themselves to be amazed at his works. They know how to read his signs, to marvel at the miracles of his love! I ask all of you, and even myself, do we know how to marvel at the things of God or do we take them for passing things?

**Brothers and sisters**, if we think about it, our lives are filled with miracles. They are filled with deeds of love, signs of God’s goodness. Before these, however, even our hearts can remain indifferent and become habitual, curious but not capable of being amazed, of allowing themselves to be “impressed”. A closed heart, an armoured heart, is incapable of being amazed. To impress is a beautiful verb that brings to mind photographic film. This is the correct behaviour to have before God’s works: to take a photograph of his works in our minds so that they may be impressed in our hearts, and then developed in our lives through many good deeds, so that this “photograph” of God, who is love, becomes ever brighter in us and through us.

And now, let us all ask ourselves: In the deluge of news that overwhelms us, do I, as Jesus shows us today, know how to stop before the great things of God, those that God accomplishes? Do I allow myself to marvel like a child at the good that silently changes the world? Or have I lost the ability to be amazed? And do I bless the Father each day for his works? May Mary, who exulted in the Lord, make us capable of being amazed by his love and of praising him with simplicity.



## The Gift of Grandparents and Elderly



**112th Plenary Meeting of  
Bishops Conference of Malaysia - Singapore - Brunei  
10th -14th July, Majodi Centre, Malaysia**



*In conjunction with the World Day of Grandparents & Elderly on 23 July 2023, Rev Fr Robert Leong gave a special blessing during the Sunday Mass to all senior citizens present.*

*Fruit boxes were also distributed as gifts among the elderly in the congregation to mark the day.*

**L**et us remember that our life is meant to be lived to the full, and that our greatest hopes and dreams are not achieved instantly but through a process of growth and maturation, in dialogue and in relationship with others. For the young, this means being ready to break free from the fleeting present in which virtual reality can entrap us, preventing us from doing something productive. For the elderly, it means not dwelling on the loss of physical strength and thinking with regret about missed opportunities. Let us all look ahead! And allow ourselves to be shaped by God's grace, which from generation to generation frees us from inertia and from dwelling on the past!

In the meeting between Mary and Elizabeth, between young and old, God points us towards the future that he is

opening up before us. Indeed, Mary's visit and Elizabeth's greeting open our eyes to the dawn of salvation: in their embrace, God's mercy quietly breaks into human history amid abundant joy. I encourage everyone to reflect on that meeting, to picture, like a snapshot, that embrace between the young Mother of God and the elderly mother of Saint John the Baptist, and to frame it in their minds and hearts as a radiant icon.

From the elderly we received the gift of belonging to God's holy people. The Church, as well as society, needs them, for they entrust to the present the past that is needed to build the future. Let us honour them, neither depriving ourselves of their company nor depriving them of ours. May we never allow the elderly to be cast aside!

*Pope Francis*



## COMMUNITY OF DIVERSITY



COOL Youth & Iban Groups Breakfast Sale  
9 July 2023



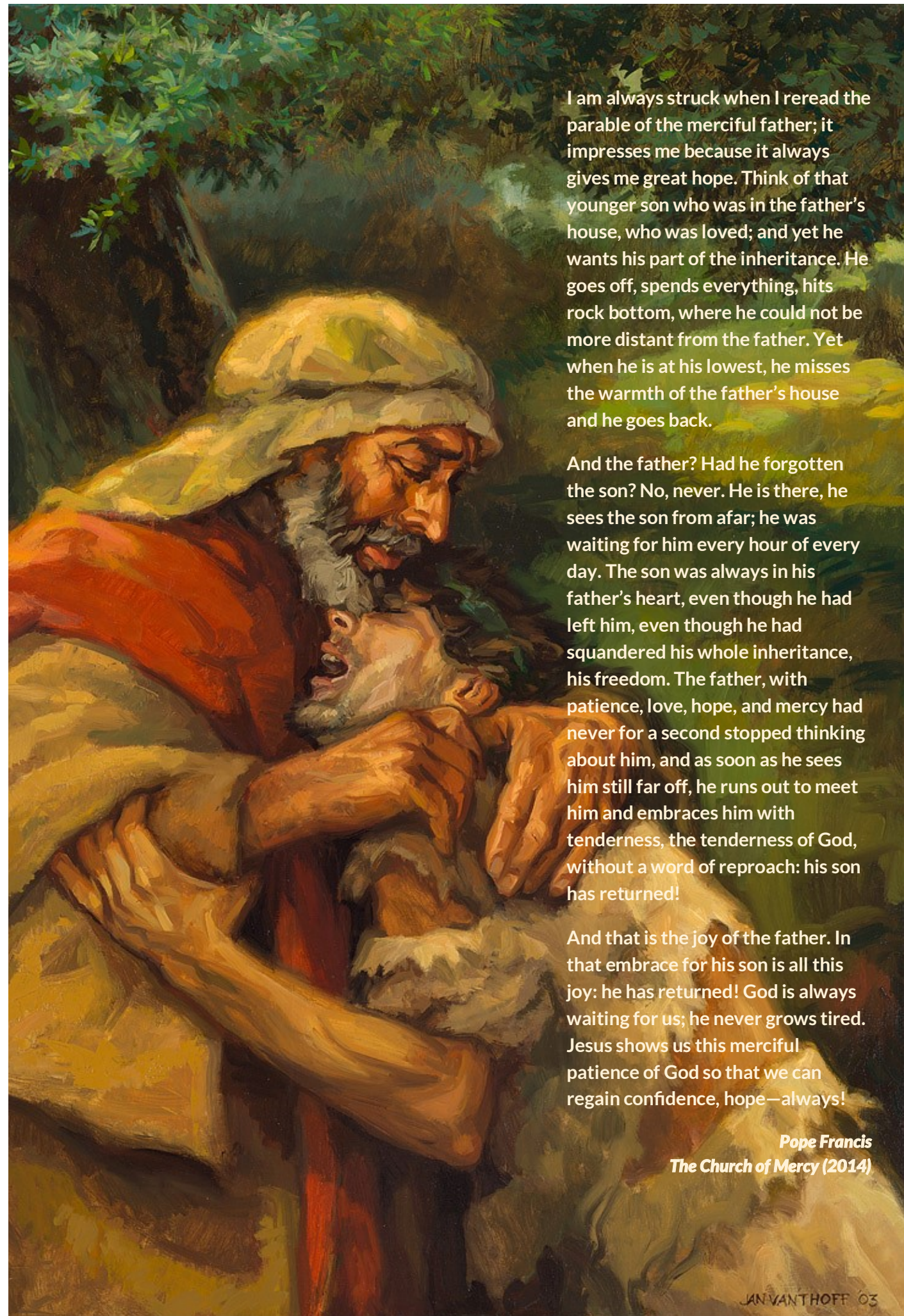
Talk on Spirituality of St Therese of Lisieux in Mandarin  
July 2023





Vicariate Gawai Celebration  
1 July 2023





I am always struck when I reread the parable of the merciful father; it impresses me because it always gives me great hope. Think of that younger son who was in the father's house, who was loved; and yet he wants his part of the inheritance. He goes off, spends everything, hits rock bottom, where he could not be more distant from the father. Yet when he is at his lowest, he misses the warmth of the father's house and he goes back.

And the father? Had he forgotten the son? No, never. He is there, he sees the son from afar; he was waiting for him every hour of every day. The son was always in his father's heart, even though he had left him, even though he had squandered his whole inheritance, his freedom. The father, with patience, love, hope, and mercy had never for a second stopped thinking about him, and as soon as he sees him still far off, he runs out to meet him and embraces him with tenderness, the tenderness of God, without a word of reproach: his son has returned!

And that is the joy of the father. In that embrace for his son is all this joy: he has returned! God is always waiting for us; he never grows tired. Jesus shows us this merciful patience of God so that we can regain confidence, hope—always!

**Pope Francis**  
**The Church of Mercy (2014)**

JAN VANTHOFF '03

## YOUTH SNAPSHOTS



**Vicariate Youth Day**  
**15-16 July 2023**





COOL Sunday School Activity Photos  
30 July 2023



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COLA Confirmation Retreat  
19-20 April 2023





COOL Confirmation Retreat  
13-14 May 2023





SJC Confirmation Retreat  
April 2023



Saints Joachim and  
Anna, pray for the  
grandparents and  
elderly among us.

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