



OUR SOCIAL MISSION

BY THE CATHOLIC SOCIAL & COMMUNITY COUNCIL

HAPPY EASTER

Are you ready to start anew?

Something happens to us each time we participate in the celebrations of Lent, Holy Week and Easter. In fact, it happens whenever we break bread at the celebration of mass: We rise. Or rather, we pass through our own death and resurrection with Christ.

But, you might say, it feels like nothing happened. Life goes on. Come Monday morning, we're back at work and things are as we have left them the week before.

It seemed that way for the disciples too. Unsure about all that was happening after Jesus' crucifixion, Peter and some of the apostles went fishing (cf. *John 21:1-19*), perhaps trying to recover some semblance of the ordinary life they once knew. But it proved futile.

Then came the light of morning and the risen Jesus was encountered on the shores, in the very midst of their everyday activity – and that made all the difference. Their work became fruitful, their faith was rekindled and life received a purpose: To follow Christ ever more closely. A new era had begun.

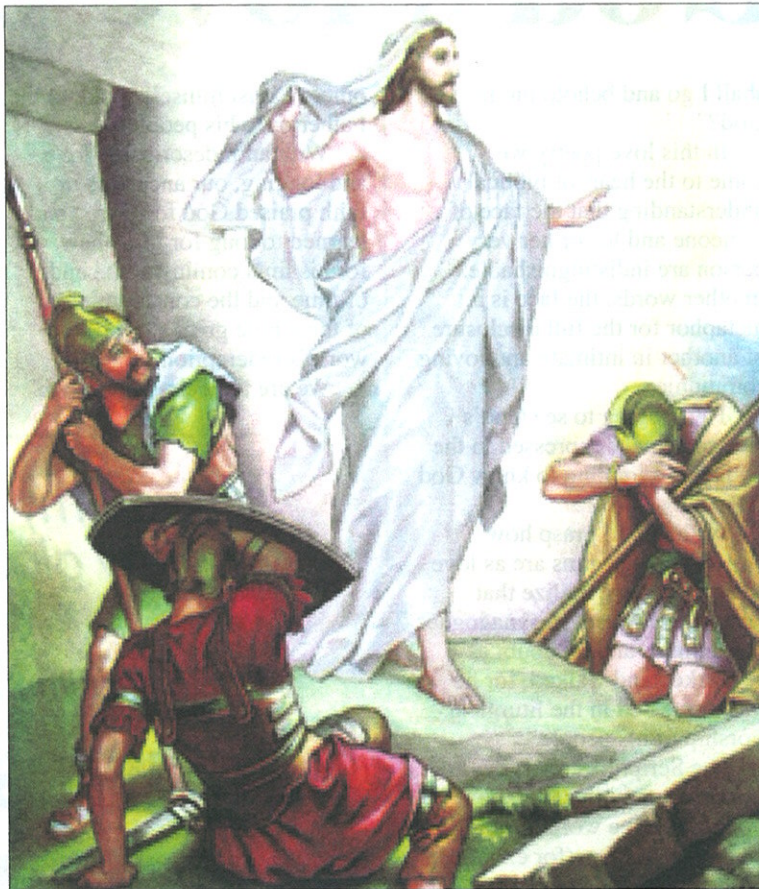
Today, the risen Jesus comes to us in our ordinary circumstances as well, but do we recognise him? Are we living in the new realm of Easter? Or are we still trying to build a life around an empty tomb, huddled fearfully behind closed doors?

Look at the world. We live in such insecurity and fear of losing our money, our possessions, our relationships or the admiration of others and our own self-esteem. We see everyone as a potential competitor and place our own needs before everything else. It becomes hard to recognise the risen Lord in our daily lives.

Easter lets us contemplate what the resurrection of Jesus means for us today.

When the risen Jesus appeared to his disciples, his first words to them were "Peace be with you". (*John 20:19*) This peace – Shalom in Hebrew – is God's gift to us at the resurrection. It means right relationships all around – within ourselves, with God, with others and all creation.

By means of Christ's passion and resurrection, all things have been reconciled to God, as God had intended because God loves us so much. Shalom is the "right order of things".



The Church's social teachings tell us that the "right order of things" is seen when we stand in solidarity with one another instead of in competition. It is seen when the dignity of every person is promoted, when the earth's resources are shared fairly among all nations and when creation is respected and cared for.

The resurrection is not a private affair limited only to Christians. It is the salvation of the whole world. Each time we opt to do what is right, work for justice, share our resources with someone in need and live our social mission, the risen Jesus is present. We bring the world a step closer to the reign of God's kingdom of justice and peace.

But before we can do this, we need to be touched by God's love first. This is where our Easter celebration comes in. It offers us the opportunity to be created anew.

We receive the Holy Spirit which the risen Christ breathes on the disciples, moving them beyond their locked doors to step out into

the world, proclaiming the Easter message fearlessly and living as the new Easter community.

At our Easter celebration and at every mass when we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus, God renews us with the risen life of Christ.

We rise beyond our selfishness, failings and fears. We are given the grace to step out and make a difference in the world. In so doing, we enable the power and love of the risen Lord to be experienced by others, especially the poor.

This is the responsibility given to every Christian at baptism.

Easter has no meaning if it is only about fulfilling our obligations to attend the Easter Triduum services, enjoying the end of our Lenten penance or eating Easter eggs.

We have to be aware of and welcome the new life that God gives us. At Easter, we are reminded that it is life, not death, that has the final say.

Easter morning begins a new era. Are you ready to make it different this time?

Come discover how you can make a difference

BEING Catholic is more than about God and us. It is also about living the teachings of Christ in our daily interaction with our fellowmen. This is taught in our social teachings which provide the basis for the Christian way of life.

Many Catholics have only recently heard of our social teachings. But if you have been helping someone in need or have made a decision based on the common good, you have embraced a part of it in your life.

CSCC is organising the first Social Mission Conference, with the theme, Social Realities, Catholic Response. Archbishop Nicholas Chia will address the conference. Key speakers RADM (Ret) Kwek Siew Jin, President of the National Council of Social Service, and Tan Chee Koon, chief executive officer of the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre, will provide the national perspective on social realities and the Singaporean response.

Following that, different Catholic leaders and those active in social work and charity will review and discuss the Catholic perspective and how we can respond to these social realities.

The Vicar General, Monsignor Eugene Vaz, will share how the Church has responded to social realities through the ages. Sister Maria Lau and Arthur Goh of the Singapore Pastoral Institute will lead participants in reflection of their and society's role.

Come, learn about the Church's social mission and the part you can play.

When: Saturday, July 26, 8.50am to 5pm

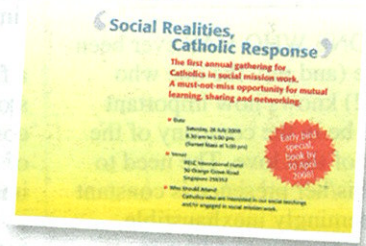
Where: RELC, Orange Grove Road

How much: \$60 per participant. Sign up before April 30 for early bird and group discount.

Registration form and more info at

www.cscs-singapore.org/tsm.html

The Social Mission Conference 2008



PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS

Whither Our Social Mission?
Archbishop Nicholas Chia

The Social Implications of Modernisation
RADM (Ret) Kwek Siew Jin
President, National Council of Social Service

The State Of Giving
Tan Chee Koon
CEO, National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre

A Focus On The Poor?
Laurence Lien
Director, Lien Foundation
Centre for Social Innovation

Where Angels Choose To Tread
Arthur Goh
Associate Director,
Singapore Pastoral Institute

Theological Reflection On Our Social Realities
Monsignor Eugene Vaz
Vicar General

In Conversation
Dr John Hui, Former Master,
Catholic Medical Guild

Finding The Lost Samaritan
Sister Maria Lau, Provincial,
Sisters of the Infant Jesus

Panel Discussions

Dealing With Our Social Realities
Alan John, Deputy Editor,
The Straits Times

Gerard Ee, Chairman,
The New NKF

Lai Ah Eng, Senior
Research Fellow, NUS

Rev Father Patrick Goh,
Chancellor

Braema Mathi, Coordinator
of MARUAH, and Former
Chairman, TWC2

Serving The Community
Ben Wong Heng Chew,
Managing Director,
Sun Microsystems

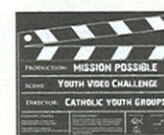
Matthew Tay, Chairperson,
Pro Tem Executive Committee

RC Prison Ministry

Michael Thio, VP General,
Int'l Confederation of Society
of St Vincent de Paul

Brother Colin Wee,
St Patrick's School

George Lim, Partner,
Wee Tay & Lim



Mission Possible – Youth Video Challenge

Calling all youth groups to showcase your creative talent. Do a video on a social issue or highlight the work of a Catholic charity. Winners will be showcased at The Social Mission Conference. Registration ends March 31. Get the registration form at www.cscs-singapore.org/missionpossible.html