



Jurong Christian Church

A branch of the.....

Multi
Media
Ministry

Jan/Feb/Mar

Volume 1 /2011

For internal circulation only

The Vine Committee

Editors:

Martin Cheah
mart5003@yahoo.com

John Lee
jpbislee@gmail.com

Publisher:

Nick Wong
digi_ics@yahoo.com

Writers:

James Chandiah
Preethi Jebaraj
Andryl Leong
Tony Koh

Photographers:

Edwin Yeo
Pek Wei Chi



Destructive floods and cyclones in Queensland. Earthquakes, some with tsunamis in New Zealand, China, Japan, Myanmar and also a possible nuclear disaster in Japan. All these happening within a short time span of about 3 months

from December 2010 to March 2011. During this time there were political upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa. Food shortages and fears of petrol cuts are forcing prices up and stock markets down. What other bad news can you find in the daily newspapers?

However the Bible has good news.

Matthew: 24:7-14 *Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of birth pains.*

"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

These are all surely come to pass but if we stand firm and continue in the faith, not betraying or hating each other, then we will be saved in the end.

"When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times."

Matthew 16:2-3

Does it scare you that we will be persecuted and put to death? It scares me too. How do we overcome this fear? I don't have the answer but maybe Psalm 13:3-5

has: *“Look on me and answer, O LORD my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death; my enemy will say, “I have overcome him,” and my foes will rejoice when I fall. But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.”*

1John 5:4-5 *“for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.”*

Will Christians escape the tribulation? There are two schools of thought, one that believe in the pre-tribulation and the rapture, where Christians will escape to Heaven before the Tribulation comes, for instance in the story “Left Behind”. The other school thinks that even Christians will go through the Tribulation because the martyrs of the past have gone through it during their time.

I too hope that we will escape the great Tribulation, like Lot and his daughters were led out of Sodom and Gomorrah, by angels, before it was destroyed by fire.



Will the end come in 2012 as some people think? Personally, I don't think so because the Bible has said so. *“No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man”* (Matthew 24:36-39)

So what do we do? *“Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”* (Matthew 24:42,44)

Martin Cheah

25 Mar 2011 – Combined Prayer Meeting.



In the first combined Prayer Meeting for 2011, the speaker challenged JCC to go forth like Caleb and Joshua despite the negative report of the other spies. It is not always the majority



that is correct.



27 March 2011 - Farewell to Bro Teo Swee Hai



Bro Teo Swee Hai always shared with us a vision to reach between 70 to 100 people in the Dialect service before God calls him to move on.

On his last day, which was also the 3rd Anniversary of the Dialect Ministry, the attendance was 85 persons.

Like an unpolished diamond, may God continue to polish Bro Teo until he shines brightly for Him. May he enjoy God's favour where ever God brings him to.

Like an unpolished diamond, may God



DEBRA GOES TO UQ

On the eve of Valentine's Day 2011 we were at Changi Airport Terminal 1, together with our family, our extended family (JCC) and friends. It was about 7.00 pm and even before we arrived at the Departure lounge, many of you were already there waiting to see us off.



We had anticipated this day many months ago and though we had hoped it would never come to pass, it was here. Even the events prior to this day had made us wonder if we are making the right move. There were the many delays in processing the university application and then there were the unprecedented floods which nearly delayed the start of the semester. Was God trying to prevent us from going or was He just timing it perfectly?



After all, wasn't Debra serving in the Youth as a cell group leader, worship leader, backup singer, GB helper and other lesser roles? Does JCC have a surplus of people serving in these areas that we can afford to let Queensland have her? Doesn't JCC have a rebuilding plan, which require much financial inputs and yet so many of her members are spending all their money in overseas education? All these questions passed through our minds.



However, there was definitely no preventing this day from coming to pass because in the end, Debra received all her travel papers and the flood receded without affecting the university and also the place where she was to stay. So we bid all of you farewell as we boarded Qantas flight QF 51 to Brisbane, Australia.



We touched down in Brisbane on Valentine's Day and while in the airport waiting for the transport to pick us to the hotel, we met some other Singaporeans. Strangely, when you are in a foreign land, a fellow Singaporean is a welcome sight. However, when in Singapore, you would probably have ignored them even if they lived next door to you.



Contact numbers were exchanged and we even went shopping with them after one meeting. I think they are now face-booking regularly. Well, maybe this is the reason we are sent overseas, so that we can outreach our fellow countrymen, people whom we will never reach out to when in Singapore.

Brisbane is a vibrant city, but only in the day time. By 5.00pm most of the shops are shut and by 7.00pm many of the bus services have stopped running. For us, this is too quiet for our liking. It would be unthinkable to hold meetings and practices in the night because transport home would be very difficult for those without their own cars. Cars however are very cheap. With just the cost of COE, we can possibly buy 2 cars in Australia.

Though there were no signs of the earlier floods, we did experience what it was like being caught in a Queensland thunderstorm. Fortunately, we had throwaway ponchos which kept us fairly dry. We also tried their bus and train journeys to familiarize Debra with her routes to the university and the Pharmacy Australia Centre of Excellence, where she will have some of her classes.



We settled her in Pastor Brian's house in the suburbs and also attended the church he worships at, in the city. Debra is now attending this church and also helping Pastor Brian to facilitate some cell group sessions.

Debra has been there about a month now and from our regular Skype, she seems to be quite settled in and happy. As parents, I guess this is all we can ask for. At least she is not feeling homesick and longing to come home.

A Meeting with ORPC



18 March 2011 – JCC's Rebuilding Committee and Bishop Terry Kee went to Orchard Road Presbyterian Church to meet with some of the elders there regarding a possible joint rebuilding of JCC.

Bishop Kee informed the team that the government seems positive with the proposal of rebuilding the church with a higher plot ratio so that it can house more

than one congregation in land scarce Singapore. Audrey, our advisor, also mentioned that she views all this progress as God's hidden hand at work, including the relocation of Professor Thomas to Singapore sometime this year.

As I look back over the whole rebuilding dream, I remember that Rev Dr William Chang had an idea to build an annex building to give more rooms for expansion and brother Swee Leong had a bigger vision to rebuild the whole church but I believe that nobody had an idea that was so big as to build a church big enough to house more than one congregation. *"As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."* Isaiah 55:9.

Why is this happening again now? JCC started this way 43 years ago. Could it be because of the things happening around the world and the Lord's desire: *"May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them"* John 17:23b

For too long the body of Christ have been split by the many small problems. Could it be time for us to look at the common important beliefs and overlook the minor differences? Does every son have the same character or do all have different characters but still sons of the same Father?

Martin Cheah

English Library 2011

26th Feb 2011. The Library Team came together to clean up the library in preparation to re-launch the English Library and attract a greater number of members to get into the reading habit again. Many initiatives are being planned to make it a better experience for members to borrow books. We hope that through reading good Christian books, our members will indeed grow to be more Christ like.



The new Library Team for 2011 is Jacqueline, Juria, Samantha, Andrea and Cecilia, with Yew Moi and myself helping out where necessary.

As the Library is under the umbrella of the Multi Media Ministry, we will try to work together with The Vine and the Web where possible to make it all a seamless process.

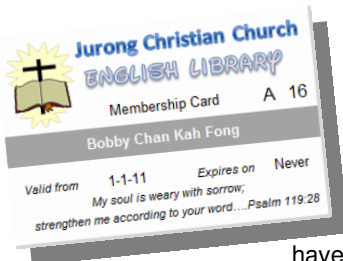


When Margaret visited the library recently, she asked if we had bought some new cabinets for the library. This was indeed a compliment to the hard work of cleaning which the library team had carried out.



One of the initiatives which the new library team has come up with is to issue each and every member of JCC a new personalized Library Card which will give you a lifetime membership. This will soon be issued

when the library is ready to be re-launched.



Do look out for the launch date where we will be giving away many collectible books free to those who come to the library with their new library cards. This offer is only valid while stocks last.

We will do our best to make your reading experience a good one. Help us by giving feedback and recommendation or ratings on the books you have read so that others may also borrow them.

JCC VISION DAY

5th March 2011 - A day set aside for members of JCC to come together to share in the vision of the leadership for JCC. The vision hinges on the



verse from Ephesians 5:1, “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

The theme for JCC, based on this verse, is:

TRANSFORMING TO BE CHRIST LIKE.

Our Calling : to be imitators of God,

Our Identity : dearly loved children

Our Life Purpose : a life of love



The people prayed, played and paid attention as the pastors

and some key leaders shared the vision.



Many were puzzled about the helium filled balloons which were floating above their heads. Finally at the end of the day, we were told to each take a balloon with us as we proceed out to the open space.

There we were told to say a prayer for the church and to release our prayer balloon to symbolically fly up to God.

May God receive our prayers for JCC.



Martin Cheah

TRANSFORMING TO BE CHRIST LIKE



for those who missed the JCC Vision Day, a video recording is available from the English Library.



NIAS UPDATES



The Children's Home is again excited as a team of students from Hall 9 of Nanyang Technological University (Singapore) are planning their 3rd annual trip to Nias in June 2011. We pray that this bond of friendship and love between the two groups from different cultural and social backgrounds will continue to create a positive impact in their lives. As they focus on teaching and community development projects, we pray that our Lord will always be the source of their planning.

Stories from Nias:

Towards the end of every year, the children at our Center return to their respective villages to celebrate the New Year with their families. Akhimi came to me and asked if he could be part of the small and selected team to look after the complex.



When I returned in mid January 2011, I was quite surprised to see the grass trimmed and the whole place well maintained. But at one look, I sensed that something was not right with Akhimi, who is a top student in his class. A couple of days later, during our evening devotion and mid way through the praise and worship, an evil spirit took control of his body and caused him to behave like a beast.

It took four older boys to hold him down. When I arrived at Akhimi's room, the older boys still held him down while another was fervently praying over him. For about an hour that night, we prayed for Akhimi's release.

Eventually, fearful and exhausted the orphan said, that night at the activity hall, he saw his deceased family members (father, mother, grandfather and another person). He then said that they had come to take him away and while this boy was relating the evening's incident, the spirit of darkness was disturbing him continuously. Then he said that they (the spirits) were unhappy because he did not return to his village. We immediately talked about the Bible and what the Lord Jesus says about the deceptive ways of these spirits.

Akhimi then assured me that his faith is still in the Lord Jesus and went on to denounce the evil spirits. For Akhimi, the disturbance did not stop that night, it continued for about a week. Unexpectedly, he would again come under the attack by an evil spirit and it had happened at school and at his dorm, but he continued to believe in Christ. We, the community, encouraged him to press on and believed with him that his strength will eventually come from the Lord. His peers prayed for him during our meetings and always assured him that the Lord Jesus is with him.

THE 28TH BOYS' BRIGADE COMPANY, SINGAPORE

The 28th BB Coy was first initiated by Rev Daniel Nelson, pastor of Jurong Christian Church, and originally formed in 1968. However, it was closed down in 1970 due to poor recruitment.

The BB ministry was re-initiated in 1973, by Rev John Nelson, pastor of Jurong Christian Church. The Coy was subsequently revived in 1974 at Jurong Christian Church. The founding members were Ho Chee Kong, Jim Lee, Thomas Ang and Brian Leong. The Coy re-started with about 20 Boys. The church's pastor, Rev Ralph Kuserrow was the Chaplain, and Ho Chee Kong became the Captain.



The Coy grew over the first few years. A bugle and fife band was formed in 1978. The 28th Coy had its first Founders' men in 1980 in the year of BB Singapore's Golden Jubilee. They were Sgts Eu Boon Kock and Richard Tan. In

1981, 28th Coy expanded into nearby neighbourhood schools. It recruited its first batch of about 50 Boys from Merlimau Primary School and about 20 Boys from Yuan Ching Secondary School. With these, the Coy was complete with a Junior, Intermediate and Senior sections. 28th Coy was also part of the third Battalion when the Brigade introduced the Battalions into its structure. The third Battalion comprised 25th, 26th, 28th and 30th Coys, and Capt Ho Chee Kong was its first Battalion Commandant. In 1981, three of its Boys were awarded the Stedfast Club award. They were then Seniors Eu Boon Kock, David Ho and Richard Tan.



28th Coy moved its base school from Merlimau Primary School and Yuan Ching Secondary School to Shuqun Primary and Secondary Schools in 1987. Since its formation, its junior section had performed well in many Brigade Juniors programme, including best Juniors unit in 1988. However, the Junior section was closed in 1991, and revived again in 2000. In 2005, the Junior section won the Bible Quiz national championship.

From 2000, the Coy continued to be active in the Brigade activities. 28th Coy won the Brigade drill competition (B division) champion in 2001. The Coy was also champion in the Total defence drill competition held at SAFTI Military Institute in 2002, and first runner up in 2003. In

2008, Senior Cadet Lee Chee Yi Gary became the first President Award recipient from 28th Coy, as the Coy celebrated its 40th anniversary. The present Chaplain is Pastor Anthony Loh, with Chin Yew Neng as its assistant Chaplain. Its current Captain is Kong Chak Mun. The Coy currently has 58 Juniors and 35 Seniors.

The following are the Chaplains of 28th Coy:

1. Pastor Rev John Nelson - 1973
(Rev. John Nelson initiated BB ministry in JCC)
2. Pastor Rev Ralph Kuserrow - 1973 to 1982
3. Paster Rev Edmund Lim - 1983 to 1985
4. Pastor Rev Terry Kee - 1986 to 1988
5. Pastor Rev William Chang - 1989 to 1993
6. Pastor Rev Fedric Lee - 1994 to 1996
7. Pastor Rev Martin Yee - 1997 to 2003
8. Pastor Samuel Wang - 2004 to 2007
9. Pastor Anthony Loh - since 2008



The following are the Captains of 28th Coy:

1. Captain Ho Chee Kong - 1974 to 1984
2. Captain Jim Lee - 1984 to 1996
3. Captain Tay Kah Huat - 1996 to 1998
4. Captain Jim Lee - 1998 to 2003
5. Captain Kong Chak Mun - since 2004



The following are the Founders' men from 28th Coy:

- 1980 - Eu Boon Kock, Richard Tan
- 1983 - Eu Boon Hoe
- 1990 - Lee Teck Chai, Sung Pong
- 2006 - Teh Lek Wei
- 2007 - Leong Jia Wei
- 2008 - Fong Ming Huan
- 2009 - Clement Tan, Ricky Teo
- 2010 - Joshua Farrock



The following are the President's men from 28th Coy:

- 2008 - Lee Chee Yi Gary



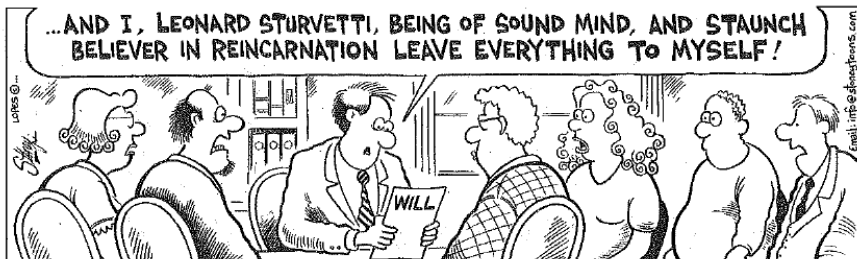
News Items You Might Have Missed



Elizabeth Taylor (1932 – 2011)

“I call upon you to draw from the depths of your being – to prove that we are a human race, to prove that our love outweighs our need to hate, that our compassion is more compelling than our need to blame.”

INSANITY STREAK



Japan earthquake

March: Earthquake of magnitude 9.0 off the north-east coast of Japan, followed by a 15-20m high tsunami

Human cost: More than 10,000 dead; 17,000 missing

Brazilian landslide

January: Torrential rainstorms trigger mudslides in the mountainous Serrana region outside Rio de Janeiro, the worst natural disaster in the country's history.

Human cost: 916 dead; 345 missing

Australian floods

November 2010-January 2011: Queensland and Victoria floods

Human cost: 37 dead, nine missing

New Zealand earthquake

February: Earthquake of magnitude 6.3 hit the city of Christchurch

Human cost: 166 dead

Sri Lankan floods

January-February: Devastating floods hit the country; more rain fell in Batticaloa than it normally gets in a year

Human cost: 62 dead; 1.1 million displaced

Burma earthquake

March: Magnitude 6.8 earthquake struck about 30 miles north of Tachileik on the Thai-Burma border

Human cost: At least 75 dead; more than 110 injured

Philippines floods

January-March: Heavy rains continued from December last year

Human cost: At least 75 dead

South Africa floods

January: Severe storms, lightning and floods

Human cost: 91 dead, 321 injured

JESUS DOES NOT CONDEMN THE SINNER

23 March 2011 Wednesday

John 7:53-8:11

53They went each to his own house, 8:1but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. 3The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst 4they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. 5Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" 6This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." 8And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. 9But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."

MEDITATION

This is a tough passage to understand as any interpretation would be faced with difficult theological questions. I would approach it from a big-picture point of view. The context is that of hostility towards Jesus, even to the point of wanting to take His life. The adulteress was brought to Jesus to test Him, that they might have some charge to bring against Him (8:6).

The story presents a sharp contrast between the action of the scribes and Pharisees and that of Jesus: the scribes and Pharisees wanted to condemn an innocent person (Jesus) and Jesus was ready to forgive a condemned person.

This is perhaps why the Christian faith is such an assuring faith. God is all out to save and bless sinners rather than punishing them for their sins, not that He condones sins. God is affectionately called "Abba, Father" in the Bible. This is for a reason. He is indeed a caring and loving father to us.

Even though our Lord Jesus had died on the cross for our sins and forgiven them when He rose from the dead, we are not perfect yet. Perfection will happen only in Heaven. For now, we are still subject to sin and capable of sinning.

In our imperfect state, we are still prone to slips. But when that happens, we must know that we have a God who, with arms wide open, is waiting for us to turn to Him. This is a great motivation for us to repent. God is more hurt than angry! God's forgiveness is not lacking. One of God's main objectives is to preserve us

after having saved us. He does it by granting us His grace through His forgiveness of our sins when we confess and repent of them.

COMMITMENT

Spend some time to reflect on your life to see whether there might be sins that you have withheld from confessing because you thought God would not forgive you. Confess them to the Lord and repent of them. Experience God's forgiveness and acceptance and experience that sweet communion with God again.

PRAYER

O Lord, give me courage to confess and repent when I slip and comfort me with your ever-ready willingness to accept and forgive me.

Rev Dr William Chang

Executive Director, Lutheran World Mission – Cambodia Mission

(extracted from this website:

<http://sg.christianpost.com/dbase/life/2182/section/1.htm>)

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) Executive Committee has appointed Rev Dr William S C CHANG, a pastor of the Lutheran Church in Singapore (LCS), to the position of Area Secretary for Asia in the LWF-DMD for a period of four years.

Dr William Chang, 51, graduated with a Bachelor of Theology from the Singapore Bible College (SBC) in 1986 and in 1995 with a Master of Theology with the Luther Seminary (now Australian Lutheran College), Adelaide, Australia. He obtained his Doctor of Theology in 2005 from the South East Asia Graduate School of Theology (SEAGST). He has served as pastor and in other capacities during his 25 years of ministry with the Lutheran Church in 'Malaysia' and Singapore (LCMS & LCS).

Dr Chang is the pioneer and Executive Director of the LCS / Mekong Mission Forum (MMF) initiated ministry in Cambodia – the Lutheran World Mission (LWM).

He has also served as church secretary, executive council member in LCMS and LCS, member of the National Council of Churches Singapore (NCCS), LCS' representative to the Singapore National Committee of Inter-Faith Relation. Dr Chang was board director of an ecumenical hospital and elder care centre in Singapore for several years. He also did adjunct teaching on Lutheranism, Biblical studies (NT) and Systematic Theology in Singapore Bible College (SBC) and Trinity Theological College (TTC).

The new Asia Secretary will take office in Geneva.

(Extracted from: <http://www.asia-lutheran.org/aln/54.ALN.pdf>)



How to Love Your Enemies by Rev James Martin SJ (a Catholic Priest)

Most of us, sadly, go through life with, for better or worse, and no matter how hard we try, a few people we may feel are our "enemies." Or, more broadly, people seem to hate us. There are people whom we've offended and to whom we've apologized, but who refuse to accept our apologies. There are people at work who we've angered, who are jealous of us or who have set themselves against us. There are people in our families who hold a grudge against us for some mysterious reason that we can never comprehend. And there are people who seem to dislike us or wish us ill for no good reason. It's a sad part of human life.

In the Gospel of Matthew (5:38-48), Jesus contrasts what his disciples had heard in the past with what they must practice as his followers. "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye.' But I say to you offer no resistance to one who is evil," he says. "You have heard that it was said that you must love your neighbors and hate your enemies. But I say to you love your enemies." Jesus is trying to move the disciples beyond what they knew into a realm of practice that will help them follow Jesus, to live according to a new law, the law of love.

But there's a problem: it seems impossible! How are we supposed to love our enemies sincerely? Are we really supposed to pray for ... whom? For people who hate us? For people who work against us? For people who want us to fail? It seems almost masochistic - a surefire recipe for psychological disaster.

A few things might help us understand what Jesus means. Now, I'm not going to water down these passages, but as in all the Gospel narratives, it's important to understand the context of Jesus's comments, and how they may have been understood in his time.

The Gospel of Matthew specifies the "right cheek." This means the blow comes from the back of the assailant's left hand, and therefore constitutes an insult not a violent assault. So some scholars say that when Jesus says the "other cheek," the idea is that when you're insulted by a slap on the cheek you should turn away and not retaliate. It's not so much an invitation for someone to keep hitting you as it is for you not to retaliate. So that may help us understand things.

Likewise, the word Jesus used when he talks about loving your enemies is not the same word that is used in other discussions of love. In ancient Greek, the language of the Gospels, there are three words for love: first, *philia*, which was a kind of fraternal or friendly love (and where we get the word Philadelphia) and second, *eros*, a romantic love.

But the word Jesus uses here is the third kind of love, *agape*, a sort of unconquerable benevolence or invincible goodwill. We're supposed to *agape* our enemies. Jesus is asking us to *agape* people no matter what they do to us, no matter how they treat us, no matter how they insult us. No matter what their actions we never allow bitterness against them to invade our hearts, but will treat them with goodwill.

So it doesn't mean that we have to love our enemies the same way that we speak about "falling in love" with someone or the way we love our family members. It simply means we must open our hearts to them.

And pray for them, too. In my experience, it's easier to agape someone you dislike (or who dislikes you) when you pray for them. Because when you pray for them, God often opens your heart to seeing people the way that God sees them, rather than the way you see them. And you can often have pity for people who may be filled with anger toward you.

But even when you understand all these things, and even if you read Scripture commentaries, these remain difficult things to hear. Even harder to follow. Loving your enemies and pray for those who persecute you is hard. In my life I've found it probably the most difficult thing to do as a Christian. Many years ago, for example, I lived with another Jesuit who simply refused to talk to me. He despised me. And I couldn't figure out why and efforts at reconciliation failed miserably. No matter what I did, nothing changed his attitude.

Over the course of many years, in light of that experience, and in light of meditating on the Gospels, I realized three things about loving your enemies.

First of all, some people may simply dislike you. So it's useless to try to "get" them to like you, much less to love you. It's useless to try to change them. You can be open to reconciliation, but you have no control over whether someone will reconcile with you. Part of this process is embracing your own powerlessness. Letting go is paramount.

Second, turning away from insults, hatred and contempt and "offering the other cheek" is emotionally healthy. Now, some schools of psychology say that you should always give vent to anger (rather than let it fester) but always responding with vituperation or vengefulness is rather a childish thing to do. Only a baby gives vent to his or her anger all the time. You can acknowledge your anger, perhaps express frustration you have in a calm way, but you don't have to respond in kind.

Third, loving your enemies and praying for those who persecute you is liberating. Too often we can find ourselves in pitched battles with the people who hate us, always seeking the upper hand, always noting who's up and who's down, always analyzing every slight. You see this in families and even in office environments, where people are trapped into cycles of vengefulness. It wears both parties down and dehumanizes everyone involved. I've seen couples, for example, whose marriages are utterly destroyed by the inability to forgive; the two become like scorpions in a jar. Jesus is offering us a way out of all that.

So what Jesus is telling us is hard, but it's not impossible. And it's necessary, too, because ultimately he is inviting us not only to forgiveness and charity but to something else: freedom and happiness. So you have heard that it was said, and you have heard that it was said to you by Jesus, who wants you to be happy.

Girls' Brigade Enrolment

20 Mar 2011 – Girls' Brigade Enrolment Day. The girls started arriving at church by 8.00 am. It was a cool day, not too hot so that the girls in the open space did not suffer from heat stroke.



The highlight of the day was the fancy drills and the prize presentations. I found the young girls very spontaneous in their response to the preacher, Wong Mui. They were even better at song presentation than our own Sunday School children.





Dialect Ministry 3rd Anniversary

