

CDM Kampung-ku Connection

Theme: Believing in Hope

March 2021

O **pening prayer:** God our Father, you have revealed yourself so evidently through the Word. Through the Word you have given us, our identity and purpose are revealed. Through Your Word, You have come looking for us and brought us to the Light of salvation. Most importantly, Oh Father, you gave us Your only Son to help us embrace Your Word. Truly the Word made flesh. Thank you, Abba Father for helping us believe in the hope of the salvation that Your Son has purchased for us when he hung on the cross in Calvary. Open our hearts, our minds, and our hearts today to fully trust You in all circumstances and to keep the hope in You alive. We ask all this through the mighty name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Believing in hope: Dwelling in the Word of God

When we ponder on the word “Dwelling”, several images come to mind. Perhaps some us may depict an image of resting, perhaps others may sketch an image of a house. The image of a home reminds us of days where we have toiled hard at the office and we can’t wait to return to our resting place – our home. What is it of our home that gives us the restful feeling? Is it the living area where you slump on the sofa and catch your favourite sitcom. It may well be the dining area where you enjoy your favourite meal prepared by a loved one. It may be your room, where you throw yourself on the bed where your eyes shut in an instant as you seamlessly drift into a blissful slumber. Now try imagining this... **The Word of God being that dwelling place.** A place where you find that much needed rest after a long and tiring day trying to be a faithful child of God with all your strengths, weaknesses, successful attempts and repeated failures. The Word of God is not a historical depiction of something that took place in the past, but they are words that are truly alive and when read in spirit, these Words come begin to manifest in our lives. In Hebrews 4:12, Paul says... **“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”** When you dwell in the Word of God, you will discover that God is talking to YOU. The question is...ARE YOU LISTENING? Or is the voice of the world crowding out the voice of God?

Personal Reflection:

Do you share the same belief of the Word of God as stated in the narration above? If Yes, why do you feel that? If No, what is your reason?

Share a moment where you felt the Word of God ignited the feeling of Hope when you pondered deeper.


Pondering on the word – LENT

Lent is one of the seasons in the Catholic liturgical season. It is best associated with forty days of fasting, prayer, and penitence which begins at Ash Wednesday and concludes on Holy Thursday proceeding to the time of Easter where we celebrate Jesus’ resurrection. Interestingly, Lent arrives after a brief “Ordinary time” after Christmas where we received Jesus coming in the form of a child as the Savior of the world.

Lent is a season. Think about that for a moment.

Did you know that The word *Lent* comes from the Middle English word *Lenten*, denoting **springtime**. Well, it would be hard to see Lent associated with Springtime. But when this season of “dying to self” is added with the **Word of God** as our companion...it is springtime indeed. Suffering becomes bearable when we consume the Word of God. It gives us hope.

Jesus spent 40 days in the desert fasting and praying and allowing himself to be tempted by the devil. Was it to weaken him or was it meant to strengthen him?

Jesus’ responses in the desert (Excerpts from Matthew 4:1-11)	What’s the commonality?
Jesus answered, ‘It is written: Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. ’	 <p data-bbox="933 952 1348 1153">Jesus dwells in the WORD OF GOD 3 times to knock out the devil quoting scriptures from Deut 8:3, 6:16, 6:13 respectively.</p>
Jesus answered him, ‘It is also written: Do not put the Lord your God to the test. ’	
Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’ ”	

Time of Ponder

Is this season of Lent different from the Lents before this? How different is it?

In this season of Lent, are you able to see yourself “getting closer” to the struggles Jesus went through in the desert for 40 days?

Do you see the Word of God as the source of strength to get you by the darkest moment in the desert?

Do you see yourself coming out stronger than before through the trials such as the effects of the pandemic or any other crosses you may be currently bearing?

Where do we go from here?

Lent is a season that helps us to look into ourselves and ponder how God is truly present in our lives. Observe how he has been navigating our generation and the many generations before us and the generations after us towards a purposeful direction. The good, the bad, the ugly, the happy moments, the bitter moments of suffering are all part of his master plan that we may not understand point but allowed to happen for our good. **It is not for us to understand why, when and how.** We dwell in the Word of God and allow the Word to reveal

the truth to our spirit. Our spirit understands what our mind and heart don't. Let the Word of God speak to your spirit today. Let your soul adhere to your spirit. Don't allow any circumstances you are going through today, be it good or bad, to determine your direction in life but instead allow the Word of God, and his promises guide the direction your life. We hold on to the Word and not to the circumstances. That is how we demonstrate our love for God.

Case in Point: End of the Road

John, a 25-year-old medical graduate is posted to a local hospital to work as a junior doctor. He is excited that he finally gets to fulfil his childhood dreams of becoming a doctor. He is all geared up and excited to carry out his mission to treat the sick and to provide them a remedy to their ailments. Two months into his housemanship, his senior doctors begin to pressure him to work long hours. On many occasions, he is ridiculed at the presence of other junior doctors and patients when he is unable to provide accurate answers. He tries reaching out to other more senior doctors-in-training for advise but they are too busy themselves, juggling between patients and dealing with the sfhierarchy. Turning to his parents proved fruitless as they aren't able to fully grasp the nature of his problems. He begins going through periods of anxiety attacks. He says he is hearing voices in his head telling him to do things that he knows isn't right. Little do the people around him comprehend what he is undergoing. Being a generally happy person, he is able to mask his deep sorrow quite effectively. 3 months on, he is found dead in his room, having consumed an entire bottle of sleeping tablets.

1) Based on what you have discussed and gone through this reflection paper so far, how would you have handled this situation if you were John.

2) If you encountered a person like John during this time of Lent, what perspective would you share with him to help him understand "suffering" in the context of our faith. List your ideas into 3 points, below:

Closing Point

Lent is about aligning our spirit with God's spirit. Lent is about believing in the Hope that the Word of God brings. Lent is about Love – the Love God shows us through His son Jesus and in return, our Love for God is shown by giving up our desires to fulfil what God desires of us. When we do that, we can then truly say...WE ARE FREE. Free to live the identity that God has decided for us. That is worth more than a million dollars, isn't it?

C *losing Prayer:* Lord Jesus Christ, Thank you for being a good example that we can follow. You understand us as you walked on this face of the earth as human.

You know what it is like. We ask you today to make this period of Lent become specially meaningful to us today. Allow the Word of God to come alive in my life as I commit to dwell in its wisdom. Reveal yourself more evidently, O Lord. Give me the strength to read 1 minute more, 2 minutes more, 10 minutes more and may these additional times make my spirit dance with joy in knowing that you walk with me every step of the way. We praise, we thank you and we glorify You. Amen.

Closing Hymn: IN HIS TIME

Song can be found on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GtcBURtm5Aw>

In his time, in his time
He makes all things beautiful
In his time
Lord please show me everyday
As you're teaching me your way
That you do just what you say
In your time

In your time, in your time
You make all things beautiful
In your time
Lord my life to you I bring
May each song I have to sing
Be to you a lovely thing
In your time

Lord please show me everyday
As you teaching me your way
That you do just what you say
In your time

In your time (in your time), in your time (in your time lord)
You make all things beautiful
In your time (in your time)
Lord my life to you I bring
May each song I have to sing
Be to you a lovely thing
In your time
Be to you a lovely thing
In your time

