

ST. JEROME'S CHURCH - ENGLISH COMMUNITY

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*Whoever does what is right is righteous,
just as Christ is righteous.*
1John 3, 7



SEPTEMBER SCHEDULE



Date	Time	Activity	Place
Sept. 7		23rd Sunday of the Ordinary Time	
	9:30 am	Lectors	Rm. 406
	9:30 am	Editorial Group	Rm. 405
	2:00 pm	Finance Committee	Rm. 406
	3:30 pm	Taize Prayer	Chapel
Sept. 14		24th Sunday of the Ordinary Time	
		THE HOLY CROSS	
	9:30 am	Choir Group	Rm. 411
	9:30 am	Eucharistic Ministers	Rm. 406
	2:00 pm	Treasurer's Meeting	Rm. 405
Sept. 15	Monday	Mid-Autumn Festival	
		Community Hiking	
Sept. 21		25th Sunday of the Ordinary Time	
	9:30 am	Vocation Group	Rm. 406
	9:30 am	Migrant Desk	Rm. 405
	2:00 pm	Coordinating Committee	Rm. 406
Sept. 28		26th Sunday of the Ordinary Time	
	5:00 pm	Parish Feast Day Mass	Church

Each Sunday
Mass 8:00 am - Bible sharing 3:30 - Adoration 5:00pm

FOR OUR REFLEXION



Just Two Words

There once was a monastery that was very strict. Following a vow of silence, no one was allowed to speak at all. But there was one exception to this rule. Every ten years, the monks were permitted to speak just two words. After spending his first ten years at the monastery, one monk went to the head monk. "It has been ten years," said the head monk. "What are the two words you would like to speak?"

"Bed... hard..." said the monk.

"I see," replied the head monk.

Ten years later, the monk returned to the head monk's office. "It has been ten more years," said the head monk. "What are the two words you would like to speak?"

"Food... stinks..." said the monk.

"I see," replied the head monk.

Yet another ten years passed and the monk once again met with the head monk who asked, "What are your two words now, after these ten years?"

"I... quit!" said the monk.

"Well, I can see why," replied the head monk. "All you ever do is complain."

So then? what is happiness?

We all aspire to be happy. All the choices which we make in life, ultimately, have one sole aim: happiness. The real question is, therefore, whether we can achieve happiness and how.

■ Our deepest aspiration is to love and to be loved. Are not the wounds inflicted by love the ones that hurt us the most? And it is also by loving that we may find a true and lasting happiness. This is not only a personal satisfaction but more a free gift of ourself to another. This does not mean that pleasure, material goods or social life cannot contribute to happiness; there is always a number of elements that make up our life. But in themselves they are not capable of fulfilling us. What really creates happiness and joy in us is the giving of ourselves and the love we receive from the other.

■ This kind of happiness, which is wonderful in itself is, however, fragile, because it is subject to our human limitations: how often do we catch ourselves pursuing our personal pleasure as an end, wanting to possess or dominate someone! And our consumer society tends to reinforce this tendency towards individualistic behavior. We find ourselves in a misguided search for happiness, which creates very often conflicts with others and, at the same time, a disillusion with ourselves, even if we cannot admit it.

■ What is more, even when we find real love, we still feel it is limited; as if the joy of being together is not complete and our heart goes on yearning for something greater. In fact, our heart is made for infinite love and only infinite love can fill it. As St. Augustine said: "You made us for yourself Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You". (Confessions).

■ Some people think real happiness, the happiness promised by God, only comes after death. So what about the time between now and then? In reality, the happiness which is to be found in eternal life and in the love of God starts right away, from the moment I open my heart and truly believe when He says to me: "You are precious in my eyes and I love you." (Isaiah 43:4) God is not far away. He brought himself close to us, as one of us: He is Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

■ With Him, new light is cast on every aspect of existence: human love, our work, our social relations, art, the beauty of creation, the whole of our lives down to those things which try us. Our heart, full of joy, finds its true dimension. With Him, the Kingdom of God is already with us, the Kingdom described by St. John: "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth (...). I heard a great voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men.

He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more (...). I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life (...) and I will be his God and he shall be my son". (Revelation 21:1-7).

Upcoming activities

Monday September 15 (mid-autumn) the English community will have a hiking. For details, check the bulletin board or your group leader.

September 28, Parish Feast Day. Special mass at 5:00 pm, English and Chinese Community. *Come and join us.*

MIGRANT DESK CORNER

Take Your Rights seriously

Forum on Migrants' Situation, Policies



Labor Law, Suspension of the Levy and Human Rights

(Causes of Migration, Hong Kong Laws, Issues and Migrants Rights)

Increasing migration from Philippines and many other poor Southeast Asian countries has made domestic labor one of the main exports in the region. Migration happens due to individual decisions influenced by material and economic factors. The state policies have been also very much influential in shaping the migration of domestic workers from developing to developed countries. As a result of these policies, domestic workers are treated much like export goods and are subjected to exploitation and abuse while facing considerable barriers to social integration in their host countries.

In the case of Filipino Migrant workers in Hong Kong, domestic workers are prevented from bringing their families with them and are denied reproductive rights. Given that many domestic workers perform childcare duties for their employers, their inability to have families of their own places made them in a contradictory situation. This is only one the laws implemented here in Hong Kong.

Are we not discriminated? protected? Well treated? Do we know our legal rights? What are the impact of the laws to us, domestic workers? These were some of the questions raised and the topics being discussed during the forum on 3rd August at St. Jerome's Church Hall which was jointly organized by the SJ English Community, Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL), Helpers for Domestic Helpers (HDH) and Asian Migrants Centre (AMC).

It was indeed enlightening and mind awakening for us migrant workers. We learnt not only how to fight for our rights and defend ourselves for the abusive employers but also how to become an efficient worker as well.

Useful Numbers

Philippine Consulate (1)	2823-8501
(2)	9155-4023
Labour Hotline	6080-8323
Immigration	2824-6111
Police/Fire/Hospital	999
Labour Department - Labor Tribunal	2717-1771
Alliance of Progressive Labor	67695948
Airport Assistance	2861-3980
Int'l Social Services	2836-3598
Caritas Filipino Service (1)	2526-4249
(2)	2147-5988
Asian Migrant Center	2312-0031
Helpers for Domestic Helpers	2523-4020

MONTH'S SCRIPTURES



Sept. 7: 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Theme: *Listen*

Readings: ♦ Ez 33:7-9

♦ Rom 13:8 – 10 ♦

Mt 18:15 - 20

Like pilgrims on a long hard journey to a holy place, we, the Church's members have to bear the burden of our own sins,

weakness and frailty on the way to God's eternal city. On this journey, we can amend our sinful habits and resume our quest for union with God. "Community" involves a sharing of beliefs, experiences, ideals and values. The Christian community leads us to put aside our selfish goals and private interest for the sake of the common good, as well as how we use our time, talents, and treasure in responding to the needs and rights of others.

Sept. 14: 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

THE HOLY CROSS

Theme: *We are saved by the Cross*

Readings: ♦ Nb 21:4b - 9

♦ Phil 2:6 - 11 ♦ Jn 3:13 - 17

This feast commemorates both the dedication of the original Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, but even more importantly, Christ's victory over death by his crucifixion and his resurrection. St. Cyril reminds us, "The cross has set free all who were slaves of sin. It has redeemed all humanity." "So let us glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and

our resurrections; through him we are saved and made free!" (Gal. 6:14)

Sept. 21: 25th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Theme: *God is Gracious*

Readings: ♦ Is 55:6 – 9

♦ Phil 1:20 – 24, 27 ♦ Mt 20:1 - 16

Grace is God's generous and free gift to his people. It is union with God, a sharing in His life, the state of having been forgiven one's sins, of being adopted as God's own child and sustained by God's unfailing love. Grace is possible for us because of God's redemptive sacrifice... Christ's offer of grace, love, and life is valid forever. Transcending space and time, Christ is present to all and offers each one of us the Life that is His. Christ ardently desires that we receive His gift and share His life. It is freely offered, and we are free to reject or accept his call to be fully united with Him.

Sept. 28: 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time

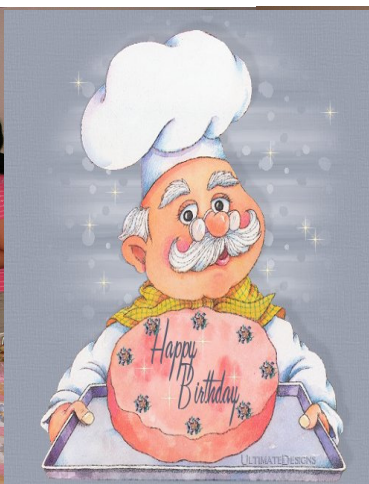
Theme: *Love in Action*

Readings: ♦ Ez 18:25 - 28

♦ Phil 2:1 - 11 ♦ Mt 21:28 - 32

God reveals to us in Jesus who we are and how we are to live. It is His plan that we freely respond, making concrete in the particular circumstances of our lives what the call to holiness and the commandment to love requires of us. At times, the freedom to choose may be limited by psychological difficulties or external conditions. But we are still responsible for the decisions we make and how we respond to God's call to live the gospel.

Happy Birthday Deacon Paul Tam



The English Community wants to thank you for you are truly our shepherd and we are so blessed to have you in our Parish. We wish you a most happy and holiest birthday. May our Lord bless you for all your good works and for what you have done for us. It is greatly appreciated and know that you are in our thoughts and prayers everyday!

On July 27, the English Community prepared a lunch party for Deacon Paul Tam, the party was indeed a success and everybody enjoyed the food and shared with Deacon's happiness. Our thanks to the whole community for their generosity and cooperation. *To Deacon Paul,* " Good health and good luck in your mission" is our wish.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ONCE AGAIN.