

Is the Reformation Over?

By Dr Roland Chia

On 30 October last year, Pope Francis visited the cities of Lund and Malmö in southern Sweden for a joint Catholic-Lutheran commemoration of the 499th anniversary of the 16th century Protestant Reformation. This event was significant because Pope Francis was only the second pontiff to visit the Scandinavian country that had played such a troubled role in Protestant and Catholic history.

‘With gratitude we acknowledge that the Reformation helped give greater centrality of sacred Scripture in the Church’s life’, the Pope said in a joint declaration. ‘We, too, must look with love and honesty at our past, recognizing error and seeking forgiveness’, he added.

The pope’s visit is seen as the latest step in the slow rapprochement between Catholic and Protestant Churches.

This year, as Protestant churches across the globe – but especially in Europe – celebrate the 500th anniversary of that great theological, intellectual and cultural upheaval in the 16th century that splintered Catholic Europe, some are asking whether the Reformation is over.

Some leaders on both sides of the divide have answered this question in the affirmative, believing that the controversies that erupted five centuries ago have been largely resolved, given the great strides that have been made in the recent history of Protestant-Catholic dialogue.

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Others maintain that Protestants and Catholics should set aside their differences and work together in the wake of the profound challenges that Christians face worldwide, namely, secularism and Islamism. Still others are of the view that while the issues that brought about the great schism in the Western church are doubtless still important, they should not be the basis of division today.

However, these viewpoints in their own ways fail to take the fundamental theological debates between the Reformers and the Catholic Church seriously. In fact, such approaches may betray the hidden crisis of Protestant and evangelical churches in the twentieth century, their subjugation to the modern *zeitgeist*.

But even those who wish to take doctrinal issues seriously have opined that the Reformation is indeed over. They often cite the 1999 *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* by the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church as the sterling example of what the recent ecumenical dialogue between the two churches has been able to achieve.

So important is this biblical doctrine that Luther declared that justification is the article on which the Church stands or falls (*iustificatio articulis stantis vel cadentis ecclesiae*). If the Lutheran Church and the Roman Catholic Church (approved by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, no less) can issue a joint declaration on this all-important article, the Reformation must be surely over, they reasoned.

This, in fact, is the view of the celebrated evangelical historian, Mark Noll, in his 2005 book (co-authored by Carolyn Nystrom) entitled, *Is the Reformation Over? An Evangelical Assessment of Contemporary Roman Catholicism*.

While these scholars may be cheerfully optimistic that the Church has entered a new phase, where old quarrels and disagreements have been resolved or set aside, others are not quite so sanguine. They see the question, 'Is the Reformation over?' as a placeholder for a myriad of theological issues that still awaits resolution.

For them, the most fundamental question is: Has the Roman Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Council really redressed the profound theological and religious concerns raised by Luther and Calvin?

While the doctrine of justification by faith is certainly important, there are numerous other theological issues raised by the Reformers that must also be addressed adequately. They include the authority of Scripture vis-à-vis the Church, the doctrine of the Church and its sacraments, Mariology, purgatory and papal authority.

These theologians question whether the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, which appears to have achieved consensus only on very broad issues, has really succeeded in resolving the centuries-long controversies over the doctrine.

They point out that although the Joint Declaration does signal a more biblical approach to the doctrine, it in fact simply reiterates the position promulgated by the Council of Trent.

They argue that the doctrine of justification cannot be considered in splendid isolation, cut off from the other great theological themes to which it is inextricably related. They further maintain that this doctrine has profound implications for church life, piety and worship.

These are important questions that must not be brushed aside for the sake of a superficial irenics. When they are taken seriously, we are inexorably led to the conclusion that the Reformation is indeed not over.

Even those who think otherwise appear not to be fully convinced of their view. For, as Carl Trueman has argued, if they really believe that the Reformation is over, then they should 'do the decent thing and rejoin the Roman Catholic Church'.

But if the Reformation is in fact not over, then Catholic-Protestant dialogue must continue in earnest.

There are many excellent examples of such dialogues, the most fruitful of which is arguably the initiative that was started in the early 1990s by Father Richard Neuhaus and Charles Colson called 'Evangelicals and Catholics Together' (ECT).

The core affirmation of the ECT statement on 'The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium' should set the tone for all such dialogues: 'All who accept Christ as Lord and Saviour are brothers and sisters in Christ. Evangelicals and Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ. We have not chosen one another, just as we have not chosen Christ. He has chosen us, and He has chosen us to be together'.

It is perhaps naïve to think that there can be quick or easy resolutions to centuries-long divisions in the Body of Christ.

But as the theologian and Reformation scholar Timothy George has so poignantly put it, 'Despite setbacks and unresolved theological differences, evangelicals and Catholics are still called to steadfastness in their witness to Christian unity. We know that such unity is not an end in itself, but is always in the service of the good news of God's overcoming grace'. ❖



Dr Roland Chia

Chew Hock Hin Professor of Christian Doctrine
Lecturer in Systematic Theology

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A Tribute to the Ordinary Pastor

Every TTC graduation service brings special joy and celebration to our students. It is special because our new graduates are now closer to a life of Christian service and ministry, a step taken when they answered God's call to serve. Not all our graduates will become pastors but many will be headed in that direction.

Jesus' instruction to Peter to "feed my sheep" (Jn 21:17) has been heeded by pastors 'shepherding' their flock through the ages. Derived from Latin, 'pastor' means shepherd whose responsibility it is to lead the flock to pasture to graze and to feed. In like manner, the pastoral role is about looking after the spiritual wellbeing of members of the congregation who need spiritual nourishment for the Christian journey.

Today, the vocation of pastoring has not changed, but the ministry has been enlarged and, at the same time, the expectations of laypeople can be quite daunting. The wide ranging ministry of a pastor includes preaching, teaching, overseeing worship, solemnizing marriages, visiting the sick, conducting funerals, chairing meetings, managing staff, counselling the troubled individual, promoting evangelistic work, developing social outreach and providing leadership in the church. Indeed, he or she plays the role of 'spiritual general practitioner' who may sometimes be expected to act as a specialist. The demands of the flock have brought about some specialization within the pastoral staff, but still the pastor touches lives as a generalist.

Life in the parish also has its 'peak hour' – the weekly worship service. Understandably, the shepherding abilities of the pastor are often assessed by how well he preaches at the pulpit. This requires him to prioritize his time to prepare well – and he should! Every pastor knows that it takes time and effort to prepare a sermon that is clear and yet profound, so that listeners can continue reflecting on the message even after Sunday worship. It is hard work for the pastor because the educated congregation will know if the scripture text

has been thoroughly studied and prayerfully engaged, and practical application made relevant to life. Short cuts in sermon preparation reflect poorly on the discipline of the preacher. Year in and year out, the conscientious pastor improves on his delivery and content so as to faithfully feed the flock. Over time, this weekly grind of sermon preparation can exhaust even the most able of preachers. Thus, words of encouragement from laypeople are essential for the pastor's morale, accompanied by honest feedback to help him hone his skills.

The occupational hazards of the busy pastor are many. Amidst his busyness, if he is not aware of his own tiredness and personal struggles, and when he spends little time in prayer and reflection, then very quickly the still, small voice of God is smothered by the dictates of the world. If danger signals go unnoticed, the consequences can be dire. The more successful the pastor is in terms of accolades and prominence, the greater the risk of yielding to temptation. Therefore, pas-

tors need to be refreshed frequently at the 'Oasis' of the Lord. Thankfully, many pastors realize the benefit of silent retreats – to be alone to commune with God. Others schedule time to keep up with serious reading and continue learning to widen their horizon. Indeed, moments of quietness and reflection provide space and opportunity to further develop the spiritual life. If the shepherd is to feed his flock well, he also needs to be fed by the Good Shepherd (Jn 10:11).

After all is said and done, the blessing pastors bring to the ministry is their love for God enriched by their different personalities and variety of gifts and talents. Imperfect and fallible, it is all the more remarkable that God has called pastors to be His shepherds. What motivates the pastor to serve is the hope that the people of God will become a community of faith-bearing witness by the quality of their lives. Finally, it will be his joy to know that members of his flock are able on their own to approach and feed from the Source of true spirituality. ❖

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Citizens of Heaven on Earth

By Rev Dr Edwin Tay

Recently, I became acquainted with the striking story of a 22 year old Singaporean while visiting a friend in San Francisco. At the age of 3, he relocated with his Singaporean parents to the United States. Being immersed in American life and culture, he grew up like any American would.

Life would have continued along the American path, if not for the letter he received from the Ministry of Defence fifteen years later, summoning him to enlist for national service.

What seemed striking to me was his subsequent response to the enlistment letter. Instead of perceiving national service as an inconvenient disruption to pursuits in “the land of opportunity” as some call America, he embraced it as an opportunity to deepen his roots. Taking his citizenship seriously, he discharged his responsibilities in the military with distinction and became an air warfare officer.

Cynics may interpret the above story as an expression of youthful idealism that so happens to be in line with national interest. Having personally met the young man and lived abroad for some years myself, I do not doubt his motivation for national service. There is something about citizenship that resonates deeply with our human desire for a sense of belonging and identity.

Recognising the theological and didactic potential of the citizenship imagery, writers of the New

Testament employed it freely to convey their message to early believers living in the Graeco-Roman world.

The status of these believers as citizens or resident aliens were earthly realities that helped to elucidate teachings concerning Christian identity, its standard of behaviour and future hope. These teachings often juxtaposed the realities surrounding the earthly, political status of Christians with that of their heavenly citizenship. Indeed, priority is consistently accorded to the latter.

One of the clearest instances in which the Christian’s heavenly citizenship is given priority is found in Paul’s declaration to the believers in Philippi: “But our citizenship is in heaven.” (Phil 3:20). Paul’s declaration has a twofold implication for his recipients. Firstly, they are not to pursue “earthly things” as the “enemies of the cross of Christ” do (Phil 3:18, 19), but live lives which are in keeping with their heavenly citizenship. Secondly, they are to place their hope in no one else but “the Lord Jesus Christ” who has the power to “subject all things to himself” (Phil 3:21).

When situated within the political climate of Paul’s day, his declaration above is both radical and risky. The imperial cult worshipped the Roman emperor as saviour and Lord. Thus, calling Christians to confess Jesus of Nazareth not simply as “Christ” but also as “Saviour” and “Lord” is to pit the authority of Jesus with that of Caesar’s.

For Paul, the issue at stake in the Christian’s

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heavenly citizenship is allegiance to Jesus Christ. Working out what this allegiance means while living under Roman rule was a crucial aspect of early Christian discipleship.

Although the political context is different for Christians in Singapore, the same challenge of being citizens of heaven on earth still applies. Like the early church, we too must work out what it means to confess Jesus Christ as Lord in our context. Carrying out such a task responsibly would require us to take seriously the tension between Christ’s insistence that his kingdom is “not of this world” (Jn 18:36), and the equally clear assertion that “the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ...” (Rev 20:15).

Holding on to this tension is important so that we do not fall into one of two errors: (1) failure to acknowledge the authority of Christ over the world, including civil institutions like governments; (2) failure to distinguish the authority of civil institutions from the authority of Christ over his church.

The first error leads to disengagement with society or nonchalance about our civil responsibilities.

The second legitimises a politicised view of Christianity that treats our civil and political life as spheres in which the church has authority to govern.

As we celebrate 52 years of Singapore’s independence this year, it is appropriate to consider afresh what it means to live as citizens of heaven on earth. This task is especially critical in a time where the social fabric of our multi-racial and multi-religious society is being tested by the threat of religious extremism.

Often, there is no simple answer to the way our allegiance to Christ should look like in the specific details of our earthly citizenship. However, the Biblical portrait of such a citizen is clear.

According to the anonymous, second century writer of the *Epistle to Diognetus*, “Christians...inhabit the lands of their birth, but as temporary residents thereof; they take their share of responsibilities as citizens, and endure all disabilities as aliens. Every foreign land is native to them, and every native land, foreign territory...They pass their days upon earth, but they hold citizenship in heaven.”¹

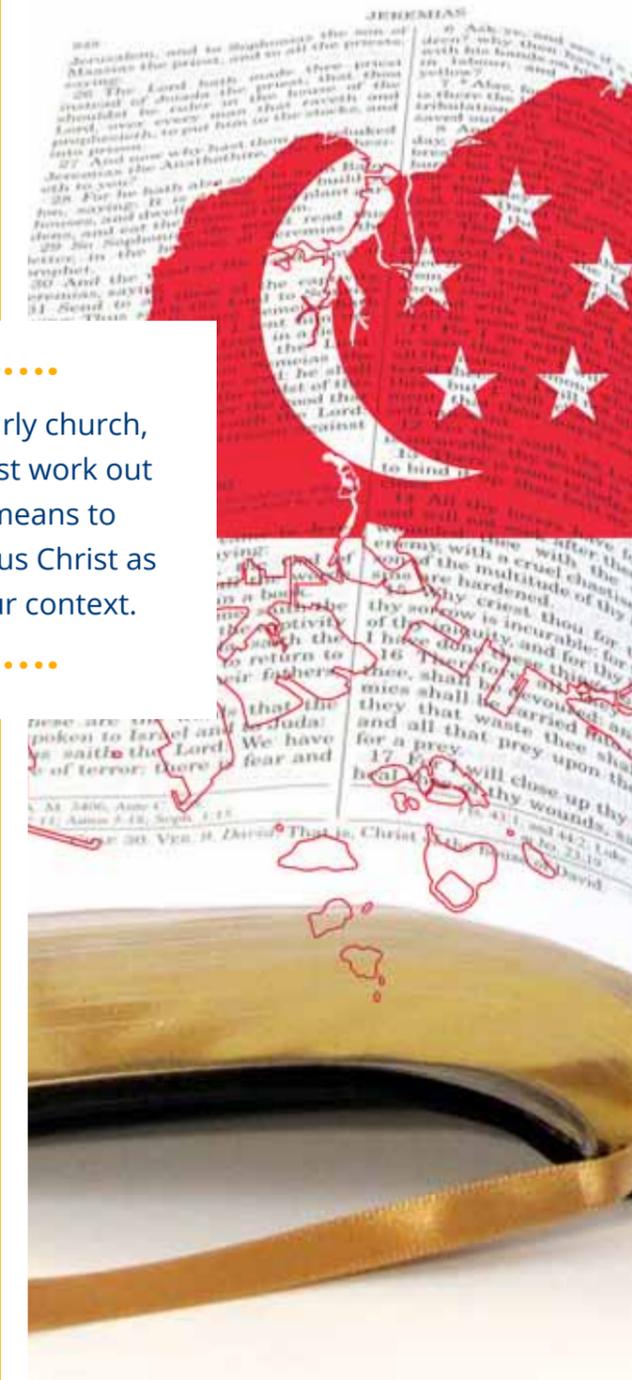
Like the saints of old, we long for “a better country, that is, a heavenly one” (Heb 11:16) and point others to its glory by the way we live. ❖

¹ Cited in Beare, F. W., *The Epistle to the Philippians* (London: A&C Black, 1973), 137.

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Rev Dr Edwin Tay
Dean of Students
Lecturer in Theology



The Myths of History

By Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun

Many people hate history and find it boring or irrelevant because they have learnt it badly. They have learnt it as a chronology of events and lists of names to be memorised. But visit any large bookstore and one can see shelf after shelf filled with history books, historical novels, and books of historical fiction. Alternate retellings of history like David Gemmell's *Troy* series and George MacDonald Fraser's *Flashman* series can be found beside Anthony Beevor's accounts of the battles for Stalingrad and Berlin, and Christopher Bayley and Tim Harper's brilliant books on *Forgotten Wars* and *Forgotten Armies* on the fall of Britain's Asian empire. And the reason these books are popular is that they tell fascinating stories. These stories grip and enthrall, whether they are accurate history or fiction.

The problem arises when, out of convenience or ignorance, we cling to a certain simplified but exciting story, without grasping all the facts. We fail to see the entire picture with all its complexities. James W. Loewen in *Lies My Teacher Told Me* gives the example of President Woodrow Wilson. Many will know of Wilson as the president who led America in World War I and who helped establish the League of Nations. But few know that Wilson was a white supremacist who sent American troops to

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intervene in foreign countries more often than other presidents in the 20th century. Wilson not only sent troops into Mexico eleven times, he invaded Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Cuba, Panama and Nicaragua, and effectively colonised them. He even intervened in Russia's civil war from 1917.

Wilson's racial policies led to the segregation of the navy and the federal government. As the Colored Advisory Committee of the Republican National Committee put it, "...Mr Wilson and his advisors entered upon a policy to eliminate all colored citizens from representation in the Federal Government." These policies also encouraged the resurrection of the Ku Klux Klan. Loewen writes that, "White Americans



engaged in a new burst of racial violence during and immediately after Wilson's presidency."

It is important to know this about Wilson, not just to see a connection between his racial policies and the stoking of racism in society, but so we get the full picture and avoid simplified and erroneous perspectives.

The same applies to church history. Since I started to teach at TTC, I have found that many students are surprised and even offended to learn that there was no sustained persecution of early Christians and that martyrdom was not peculiar to Christianity. It is true that Christians were persecuted, and many Christians were killed just because they were Christians. Suffering for Jesus was sincere, significant and inspirational. It motivated others and gave them courage. But there was no sustained and continual Roman Empire-wide persecution of the early Christians. And many people do not know that.

In fact, when the Romans did persecute Christians, they did so not out of hatred. The Romans had logical reasons for persecuting Christians who were seen as threatening the safety of the empire and its cities.

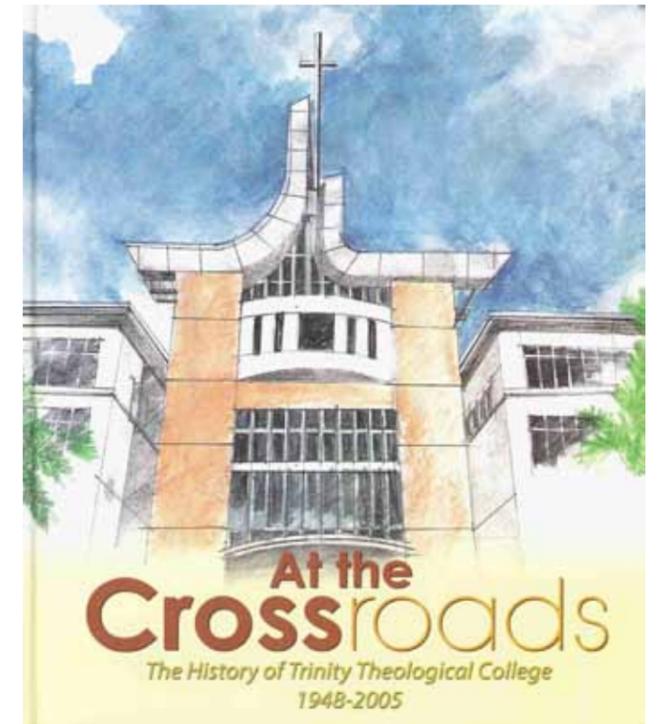
Candida Moss, Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity at the University of Notre Dame, has written a compelling book on *The Myth of Persecution*. Much of what she says is not new, but she draws the facts together and eloquently pushes a cogent argument to shatter the myth of a sustained persecution of Christians. Because she does this, she is able to draw new lessons and give new perspectives not just on history, but also on how Christians should approach issues in our day. As she concludes, "We can choose to embrace the virtues that martyrs embody without embracing the false history of persecution and polemic that has grown up around them."

What other myths of church history have we grown comfortable with? There is the idea that the Crusades were an aberration in international relations instead of part of a long history of conflicting interests. Then there is the oft-repeated refrain that Christianity is a western religion when there is clear proof that Christianity had spread to China and to high officials there by the mid-7th century. Today perhaps the biggest myth is the conflict model of science and religion; heroic science faces off against superstitious Christianity. We have come full circle from when Pliny in his *Letter to Trajan* in 112 BC wrote about Christianity as a superstition.

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The answer is in primary sources: actual contemporary documents and eye-witness accounts. These must be collected and stored and catalogued. Churches must either establish their own archives open for research, or allow the National Archives to store church records. The selfish and short-sighted hoarding of material is almost as bad as the complete lack of effort to preserve records for posterity.

The effort to find truth is worthy and legitimate. The need to find historical truth has an added dimension because historians try to understand and connect the past to illuminate the present and imagine the future. It is in knowing as completely as we can the past, with all its complexities, that we have a better sense of who we are today and how we should approach today's problems. We need to stop retelling myths and start exploring actual historical facts. ❖



Rev Dr Chiang Ming Shun
Lecturer in Church History

New Beginnings ◦ New Family ◦ New Horizons

By Kjelti Koh, a 2nd year MDiv student and Sandra Chi, a 2nd year MTS student



Set on a hill, the walk up to Trinity Theological College is part of the daily commuting grind for some. Yet, for those entering TTC for the first time as students, that very same climb up on the first day of orientation holds deeper significance – the expectancy of new beginnings and new horizons.

➤ New Beginnings

Starting in a new place often brings a sense of uncertainty. Knowing that, the TTC seniors planned the orientation not only to familiarize the new students with school systems and environs, but also to allow maximum opportunity for people connections. Freshmen began their two-day orientation in groups helmed by TTC seniors.

In a room filled with people from diverse backgrounds and nationalities, the opening time of worship brought a sense of togetherness as everyone lifted up their praises to our one God. Icebreakers group lunches and humorous remarks from the emcees helped the atmosphere to warm up quickly as the ‘freshmen’ settled into the environment.

The Principal’s Address by Rev Dr Ngoei Foong Nghian, followed by the address from the Dean of students, Rev Dr Edwin Tay, served not to add a sense of gravitas but was a needful reminder to incoming students that theological edu-

cation is spiritually formative, not just in the acquisition of knowledge, but also through the process of community living and fellowship.

Particularly significant was the Rite of Passage, where students wrote their hopes and prayers for the journey ahead and committed them in prayer to the Lord. Chan Xinhui, first-year MDiv student, was moved to tears – reminded of the wonderful grace of God in her life and her calling to ministry.

Apart from the ‘freshmen’, the seniors who volunteered also reflected on their own theological journeys. Clara Loh, second-year MDiv student, was encouraged by a reminder of the true value of theological pursuit from the Principal’s Address – that “the aim of theological education is to develop spiritual intuitiveness so that we might discern the voice of God in our everyday life.”

➤ New Family

The 2017/2018 cohort saw 35 new students in the English department and 22 new students in the Chinese department. Hailing from seven different countries and from diverse walks of life, it

was heartening to hear testimonies from the freshmen about the warmth of the fellowship that they immediately felt. Timothy Ang, first-year MTh student, felt at home from the start. He was deeply appreciative of the fact that many seniors had given up some of their semester break and returned to college early to serve at the orientation. Rufus Chan, first-year MDiv student, shared his experience of how the seniors were very helpful and encouraging. When he expressed the possibility of family lodging at TTC in the future, some even invited him to their family apartment so that he could see what it was like.

Prior to the orientation, the international students had already begun settling in. The International Students Welfare Committee had painstakingly planned for every international student to be met at the airport. A welcome pack, coordinated by a team of ladies from Orchard Road Presbyterian Church, consisting of necessities such as bedding, toiletries, snacks and electrical adaptors were given out to each. Ma Runzhi, first-year MDiv student, was overwhelmed by the love and concern shown in such practical ways.

➤ New Horizons

Student life at TTC is an intersection of spiritual pilgrimage and privilege, crossing paths with like-minded students all on their individual journeys in serving God. The deep camaraderie comes not just from mere friendship, but a kinship born out of a common desire to serve the King of kings.

For many embarking on theological education at TTC, they enter with fears of the unknown, and of the demands of balancing studies, family and ministry. Some who have switched vocations, such as visual artists and pilots, see it as a tremendous step of faith. Yet, as Rufus shared, one of the songs at Orientation assured him deeply that while he may not know the future, he knows Who holds his hand.

Runzhi recounted how she was deeply touched at the opening worship time at Orientation, as she saw how she was a part of a community filled with people of different life stories, yet worshipping the same God.

It is perhaps fitting that a picture of our eschatological future of worshipping God with different tribes and nations should start off the college year. After all, theological education is ultimately oriented towards our worship of God. For Orientation 2017, we began with the end in mind. ❖

Redeemed, Refined, Reflecting 2017 Graduation



"This is only the start; regardless of whether you will serve full-time or in the marketplace, you will face countless challenges and trials ahead."

"... it is wise to build an altar to Almighty God as you end your chapter as a student and start a new chapter in ministry for God."



"Among all of David's qualities, beyond being a king and a soldier, David was a servant."



"Reflecting' reminds us that our lives and ministries are not so much doing what we want to do for God as they are about letting God do what He wills through us."



Bishop Low Jee King graduation speaker



Students celebrating after graduation service

The TRINITY Lectures 2017

By Dr Chan Yew Ming, Lecturer in Old Testament

For many of us, the essential question of suffering is, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" By asking why, we want to know the origin and cause of suffering, but above all, why suffering happens to us? A.C. Benson succinctly summarizes our feeling, "I wonder why we suffer so strangely – to bring out something in us, I try to believe, which can't be brought out in any other way." (Extracts from the Letters of Dr A.C. Benson to M.E.A.)

Was the issue of unjust suffering unique to the book of Job? Professor Seow Choon Leong, the Vanderbilt, Buffington, Cupples Chair in Divinity, Distinguished Professor of Hebrew Bible has addressed this issue by drawing from literature belonging to ancient civilisations in Egypt and Mesopotamia some 5000 years ago. In this opening lecture, *In the Cradle of World Literature*, he illumines the audience not only with a fascinating and colourful presentation, but also the significance of the conception of cosmology and justice in those places. Numerous archaeological discoveries and tablets indicate that the sufferer does not know the cause of suffering and their contents reveal many parallels with Job.

This illuminating background assists the audience as they grapple with the different views of God's role in Job's suffering, covered in subsequent lectures. Literary design and structure of the book represent the author's stimulating challenge to anyone who is familiar but yet remain unconvinced by the standard and popular views of divine prerogative and handling of unjust suffering. Professor Seow's response provides stimulating thoughts on relevant issues of creation, the possibility of disinterested piety and influence of dominant cultures. His creative interpretations of Behemoth and Leviathan offer new ways of reading the text. Consequently, his judicious analysis of the book of Job, which has come down to us through the Hebrew Bible, reminds us not to draw over-simplistic answers to the question of unjust suffering. Instead of leaving us with merely theoretical analysis, he provides a rich variety of texts that show past interpreters have read the story of Job in different ways. The intriguing views of different generations of readers, and within each religious tradition, make us recognize the importance of the history on interpretation of biblical texts.

In the final lecture, Professor Seow addresses the theological implications of the book of Job.

From the analysis of each text's context and sources, he recognizes the pastoral challenges to those searching for a clear answer to unjust suffering. He advises us, despite life's ambiguous and stark reality, to avoid a preconceived single view of God in our reading of Job.

Not surprisingly, the captivating presentations and valuable materials motivate reflection on these fresh insights and questions during the Q&A time, especially the pastoral implications for our Christian faith. The audience engaged Professor Seow not only on academic possibilities, but also his pastoral advice on issues related to preaching and his personal reflection on Job and the book's influence. His honesty and sensitivity in his response struck a chord with the audience.

The Trinity Lectures is a biennial event where well-known Christian scholars are invited to bring cutting-edge scholarship in the areas of Biblical Studies and Theology. This series of lectures on *Job and the Question of Unjust Suffering* has benefitted the many who attended these lectures. ❖



Re-Envisioning the Equipping Ministry of CDCM

By Rev Dr Leonard Wee, Director of CDCM (English) and Lecturer in New Testament

The Centre for the Development of Christian Ministry (CDCM) recently undertook a review of its ministry directions. Discussions were also held with some of our existing participants. This article serves to summarise the key points and initiatives resulting from the evaluation.

It is acknowledged that, by the grace of God, TTC has been growing from strength to strength under the capable leadership of its leaders in the last 10 years. Apart from the training of pastors, missionaries and theological faculty members in Singapore and South-East Asia, TTC has also served the church in educating Christians through its CDCM programmes.

In recent years, there has been a growing need for our lay members to be theologically equipped as they bring their Christian witness to their workplaces, schools, homes and other settings. This is evidenced by the increasing number of participants who are enrolled into our Certificate- and Licentiate in Christian Ministry programmes, and more recently the Certificate in Mission Practice programme that is organised jointly with the Anglican Diocese and the Singapore Centre for Global Missions.

While not all Christians are called to serve in full-time ministry as pastors or missionaries, they are nonetheless witnesses of the gospel of Christ wherever the Lord may place them. In an increasingly complex and challenging world, Christians feel the need to be equipped to be good witnesses of their faith, and as lay persons who serve in their respective churches.

In view of this growing need within the Christian community, TTC intends to open its theological expertise to serve a wider constituency. In addition to the quality theological training that it provides for those

who are preparing to serve as pastors, missionaries or theological educators, TTC will offer a wider range of training programmes to serve the lay members within the Christian community as well.

Some of the key initiatives are as follows:

1. **Opening more locations for CDCM courses.** In order to cater to the needs of working professionals, CDCM will hold courses in more locations, adding to those situated at St Andrew's Cathedral and TTC itself. This would make it more convenient for participants to attend our courses.

2. **Collaborate with churches.** In order to share its expertise in theological training with churches and denominations, CDCM will collaborate with these partners to provide quality training programmes for their members and the Christian public. An example is the Certificate in Mission Practice programme that is jointly organised with the Anglican Diocese and SCGM, which has been well received.

3. **Reaching new participants.** CDCM is prepared to offer training to otherwise less-accessible segments of its constituency. For example, students in Christian fellowships in our tertiary institutions may be interested to undertake some theological studies along with their academic pursuit. These may graduate to become Christian professionals who are not only competent in their professions, but also theologically equipped to be good witnesses at their workplace.

4. **Offering a flexible and yet robust framework for learning.** Understanding the need of working Christians for flexibility while maintaining the quality of their learning experiences, CDCM will develop a flexi-curriculum that would allow quality programmes to be delivered with these objectives in mind.

To support these new initiatives, CDCM will develop a team of competent and qualified teachers who are committed to train CDCM participants. Beginning in January 2018, the "Centre for the Development of Christian Ministry" would also be renamed to become the "Centre for Ministry Development", or "CMD" for short. This slight simplification of the name would make it more conducive for a variety of purposes.

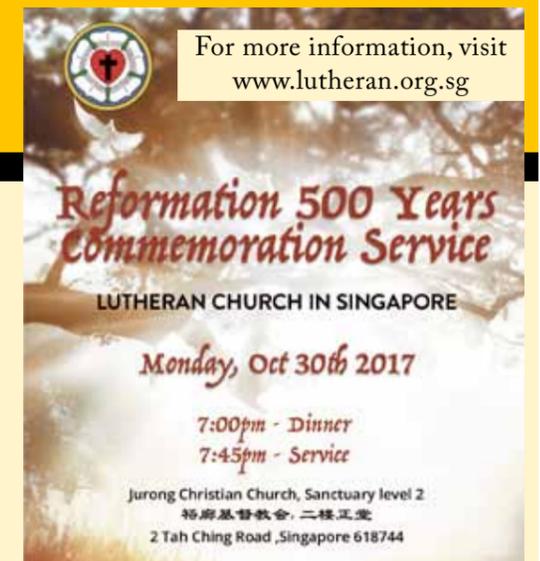
We urge our readers to pray for the directions of the CMD as part of TTC's ministry to the Christian public, and to let us know your ideas or suggestions, if any. We would appreciate hearing from you. Send your emails to cdcm@ttc.edu.sg. Thank you. ❖

Reformation 500 Years Commemoration Service

This year 2017, the Lutheran Church in Singapore (LCS) will be commemorating 500 Years of Reformation with a Joint Worship Service with the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore led by Archbishop William Goh and Bishop Terry Kee, Bishop of LCS on 30 Oct 2017 at Jurong Christian Church.

You are invited to this special service.

The Lutheran Church in Singapore is one of the four governing denominations of Trinity Theological College. ❖



Into the Second Year of Spiritual Retreat Weekends

By Dr Simon Chan, Lecturer in Theology and Dr Jimmy Tan, Lecturer in Pastoral Theology

The Spiritual Retreat for Lay Leaders (SRL) marked its first anniversary this May. The idea for such a retreat originated from the Principal when he shared with us about the need for a periodic retreat that would bring spiritual refreshment and guidance to lay leaders among our local churches. What emerged from that conversation was the offering of a quarterly spiritual retreat that is intentionally designed for lay leaders. It would be a brief overnight retreat, just twenty-four hours long, that begins on a Friday evening and ends on a Saturday evening.

Each retreat would be capped at twelve participants so that individual spiritual direction can be offered to every retreatant. As many are on retreat for the first time, guidance would be given on several rudimentary spiritual exercises. Finally, the retreat prayer

times would include corporate and individual prayer to serve as a model for an ecclesial-centric Christian spirituality. In this way, retreatants are given a model for spiritual retreat that can be practiced by the leader, or with one's fellow leaders, over a weekend.

So far, the feedback on the retreats has been very heart-warming, and we are truly humbled. Many leaders have shared how they have benefitted from the experience and are keen to make spiritual exercises an integral part of their lives. The following are a few examples of what some leaders say.

- The methodical introduction to the spiritual disciplines and heritage from the early Church Fathers helped me to frame the retreat and practices solidly with Scripture and to tailor them to my own individual situation and season of life.

- The experience taught me to go into retreat to draw strength and direction from God and then to return to community with the offer of God's peace.

- The retreat helped me learn how to draw near to God and spend meaningful time with him through a fine balance of guidance and practice of the spiritual disciplines.

- The session with the spiritual director helped me to receive wise counsel that is practical and doable in busy Singapore.

In closing, it may be said that the impetus for the SRL is in many ways a reflection of the ethos we share at TTC on spiritual formation. It is our endeavour to cultivate the Christian life as a lived relationship with the triune God—on campus and beyond. ❖



Retreat dates for 2017 have been fully taken up. We will be conducting 4 retreats in 2018 :
Mar, May, Sep, Nov
More details in Dec issue of Trumpet.

(From L to R) Rev Dr Andrew Peh, Dr Tan Kim Huat, Bishop Kuan Kim Seng, Canon Yee Ching Wah and Mr Lawrence Ko at the Launch of Certificate in Mission Practice on 18 Apr



ETHOS Christian Scholars Fellowship

By Dr Roland Chia, Theological and Research Advisor for the ETHOS Institute for Public Christianity

On 27 July, about 18 scholars from different tertiary institutions gathered at Trinity Theological College for the first meeting of the Ethos Christian Scholars Fellowship (ESCF). These scholars were from NUS, NTU, RSIS, SIT, SMU and TTC.

Organized by the Ethos Institute for Public Christianity, the ECSF hopes to bring Christian academics from the institutions of higher learning in Singapore together to learn from one another and to encourage each other in their vocation as scholars, educators and public intellectuals.

Professor Seow Choon Leong, a visiting Old Testament scholar from Vanderbilt University, gave a brief talk on significant passages from Deuteronomy that showed how Israel's relationship with God shaped its communal life.

This was followed by a robust discussion with the speaker. The meeting ended with prayer in smaller groups.

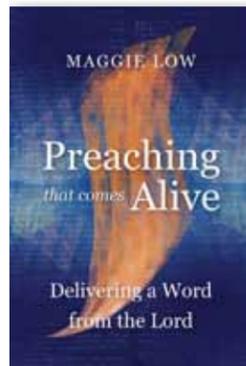


Ethos Institute plans to conduct such meetings four times a year.

Ethos Institute for Public Christianity is a Christian think tank formed by the National Council of Churches of Singapore, Trinity Theological College and The Bible Society of Singapore. ❖

New Book

Preaching That Comes Alive Delivering a Word from the Lord



Literary productions from the faculty members of TTC are gathering pace, and we are pleased that the Rev Dr Maggie Low has recently written a very helpful book on preaching. Seasoned pastors and preachers will recall the jitters they had when they preached their first sermon, and wishing they had guides then that were trustworthy and empathetic, comprehensive and yet accessible. They may perhaps be envying their junior colleagues now, for such a guide has come. Chock-full with illustrations and practical advice, the book will prove to be a soothing and motherly presence for many a fledgling or fearful preacher.

The book was launched on 11 July 2017 at TTC and an insider take on this special book was provided by the author. As Dr Simon Chan observes about the book, 'this is more than a how-to book on preaching; it is preaching itself', so we find the same phenomenon at the launch. The session was not just animated but homiletical too, as the author expertly and authentically 'walked the talk'. The book came alive! Not surprisingly, many copies – affectionately autographed – were snapped up by the many who turned up for the event. Praise be to God for the blessings at TTC. ❖

CDCM Evening Classes

Theology of Mission

Dates: 20 Sep – 15 Nov (8 Wed evenings, no class on 18 Oct)
Time: 7:30pm - 9:30pm
Venue: St. Andrew's Cathedral
Instructor: Dr Phillip Marshall

Introducing World Religions

Dates: 21 Sep - 9 Nov (8 Thu evenings)
Time: 7:30pm - 9:30pm
Venue: TTC Lecture Room 2
Instructor: Rev Dr Andrew Peh

Details are available on our website www.ttc.edu.sg

TRINITY News

Congratulations to...

Bishop Terry Kee on his re-election to a third term as Bishop of the Lutheran Church (LCS) in Singapore on 20 May 2017. The Installation Service was held on 22 July at the Jurong Christian Church. The LCS became a governing church of TTC in 1963.

The Bible Society of Singapore on its 180th Anniversary celebrated on 4 July 2017. BSS also presented the Lifetime Achievement Award to the late **Rev Peter Hsieh** who was TTC lecturer as well as first local General Secretary of BSS in the 1960s. The award was presented to TTC.

Elijah Chek Jia Jun (BD 2017) and **Ye Can Can** (MMin 2017) on their marriage on 6 May.

Geoffrey Steven Hill (BD 2014) and his wife, **Lam My An** (BD 2013) on the arrival of their son, Owen Gregory on 16 June.

Pastor Benjamin Fong Guo Wei (BD 2014) and his wife, **Rev Peace Choi Pyong Hwa** (MDiv 2013) on the safe arrival of their first born,

David Ambrose Fong Eun Sung on 21 June.

Jacob Lim Kian Seng (BD 2017) and **Charmaine Tang Sook Leng** (MDiv 2017) on their marriage on 24 June.

Dr Alpheaus Graham Zobule (MTh 2003) on his appointment as Director of Islands Bible Ministries and Kulu Language Institute in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Preacher Tan Mui Kiang (MDiv 2012) on her ordination and installation as Associate Minister of Bethel Presbyterian Church by the Chinese Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in Singapore on 22 July.

Condolences to...

The family of the late **Rev Ng Kiok Nam** (BTh 1970; MTh 2005), aged 78, who was called home to the Lord on 2 April in Malaysia.

Chadrick Yeo Yong Boon (MDiv 3) and his wife Elaine on the passing of his father-in-law, the late Mr Yeoh Su Kheng on 21 April in Penang.

David Lim Han Hui (MTh 2) and his wife Lim Suk Fern on the demise of his father, the late Mr Lim Soon Seng, aged 69, on 22 April.

Chung Lai Mei (BD 2) and her husband Chow Yuk Hin on the passing of her mother-in-law, the late Mdm Liu Quee Inn, on 25 April.

Dr Roland Chia Cheng Kim (BD 1989), TTC lecturer, and his wife Serene on the demise of his father-in-law, the late Mr Lee Teng Koon on 21 May.

Dr Tan Chooi Chooi (MDiv 3) and her husband, Dr KP Looi, on the passing of her mother, the late Mdm Loh Oh Ping @Law Ah Ee, aged 87, on 26 May in Kuala Lumpur.

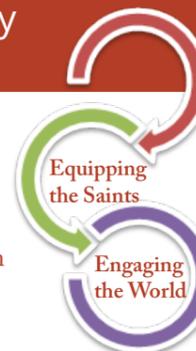
Annie Soh Yeok Hui (MDiv 1991) whose mother, the late Mdm Low Luang Kee, was called home to the Lord on 16 July.

Rev Dr Leonard Wee, TTC lecturer and his wife Doris on the demise of his father-in-law, the late Mr Chow Koh Fook, aged 86, on 16 July.

We Invite you to Support the Ministry of Trinity Theological College

Your support will enable our college to

- be equipped with a competent and dedicated faculty
- provide substantial subsidies for tuition fees
- offer scholarships to less fortunate students
- house one of the best theological libraries in the region
- organize workshops and conferences at minimal cost
- furnish and maintain our 16 year old campus



Here are some ways you can make your financial contributions:

- By ATM or Bank transfer to our DBS current account 033-017261-3
- By Cheque to "Trinity Theological College". Mail to: 490 Upper Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 678093
- By way of Bequests to TTC. We shall be pleased to discuss this plan with you. You may email the principal@ttc.edu.sg or call us at 6767 6677



The Trumpet is published in English and Chinese. To view the Chinese edition, please visit our website www.ttc.edu.sg

2018: Seventy Years of Theological Education

The anniversary of an institution is a time for recollection and celebration of mission accomplished and goals met in the recent past. However, when it is the 70th year of the institution's founding, then the occasion becomes even more significant. It will be so next year for Trinity Theological College when it celebrates 70 years of serving the church. Envisioned by missionaries while interned in Changi Prison during the Second



World War, TTC was founded as a school of theology in 1948.

While the 70th Anniversary Service and Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on 5 October 2018, the college will hold a year-long celebration with monthly events beginning in January. The events include a preaching symposium, a conference to focus on Chinese-speaking churches, a conference on theology, a CSCA theological symposium, and a special alumni programme. Some Ethos events will also be held on campus. Besides these events, three projects will be launched: a souvenir magazine, a new corporate video and a new musical arrangement of the TTC anthem.

More information will be furnished in due course and a detailed calendar of events will also be featured in the December issue of Trumpet. Meanwhile, we invite you to pray for TTC as it looks forward to 2018 to celebrate, give thanks and seek God's direction for the future of theological education in Singapore and the region. ❖

Earnest Lau Professorial Chair

Trinity Theological College is pleased to announce the appointment of Rev Dr Mark Chan Lap Yan as the next Earnest Lau Professor of Systematic Theology. The professorial chair was previously held by Rev Dr Simon Chan. Dr Chan retired in June 2016 and now serves TTC as part-time lecturer. ❖

Date: 28 Aug 2017, Monday

Time: 8:00pm

Venue: Trinity Theological College Chapel, Level 4

Please register your attendance at
www.ttc.edu.sg
Closing date : 25 Aug 2017

An invitation card with a decorative border. The text reads: "Trinity Theological College cordially invites you to the Induction Service of THE EARNEST LAU PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY". Below this is a photograph of a library with bookshelves and a banner that says "And God called the dry land Earth... the waters called he Seas: and God saw that the earth bring forth... And God said, Let the earth bring forth... the fruit tree yielding fruit... and it was so". Below the photo, it says "Rev Mark L. Y. Chan, PhD (Nottingham) and Inaugural Lecture 'God's Word as God's Work'".

Trinity Theological College
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THE EARNEST LAU PROFESSOR OF SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Rev Mark L. Y. Chan, PhD (Nottingham)
and Inaugural Lecture
"God's Word as God's Work"

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