

Bishop's Lenten Message  
14 February 2018  
Diocese of Singapore

## 2018 Year of Prayer: SEEK HIS FACE (Ps 27:8)

In the grace of God, we have begun the Church's season of Prayer & Fasting, the 40-day period that commences on Ash Wednesday and leads into the climactic victory of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ that we celebrate on Easter Sunday. What will the season mean for you, your family and your small group?

It is amazing that there is resonance across the body of Christ in Singapore that 2018 is to be the Year of Prayer. The Lord goes ahead of us and by His Spirit prepares the way. Many of you will be aware that this Year of Prayer leads to the Year of Proclamation in 2019 (the 'Celebration of Hope' National evangelistic rally); which in turn leads to 2020 as the year of Personal Discipleship. We are entering a **season of god's amazing visitation upon the church and upon the land**. It's all because of God's merciful heart and unstoppable purpose. I believe it will be a visitation of the Lord that leads to radiant holiness, a bumper harvest of souls, righteousness in the land and a marvelous raising of Kingdom workers for the mission fields of the world (in keeping with the Antioch calling of the Church in Singapore).

And I know that such a Visitation of the Lord is undergirded by a Church that gives itself to prayer and fasting.

### **How can you and I meaningfully participate in this Lenten season?**

- (a) Use the *Diocesan Lenten Prayer Guide 2018* in your daily devotions. You can download it from the Diocesan website ([www.anglican.org.sg](http://www.anglican.org.sg)) or ask for a hard copy from your church office. The foreword of the Prayer Guide carries this exhortation: " let's not be caught off guard about what God is doing in our midst. Otherwise, we will miss out on the blessings that accompany His work."
- (b) Set aside at least one day weekly for fasting from food (for a set time) in order to focus on prayer and increase reliance on God. Make that time a special time of praise, adoration & intercession – and a time of attentive listening to God to hear what He may choose to reveal.

- (c) Join a larger group (which can range from a band of just 2-3 persons to a church prayer meeting) at least monthly so that you can join others in lifting up prayers & supplications to Almighty God (Mt 18:19-20; 2 Tim 2:1-6). Please know that there are opportunities for this at our Cathedral Church at St Andrew's during Lent: daily noontime prayer at the Nave from 12:30pm to 1pm Mondays to Fridays; weekly Tuesday Communion and Intercession service from 7:30am to 8:30am. You are welcome to bring friends along. Please also refer to LoveSingapore's list of 2018 Year of Prayer Gatherings on our Diocesan website (<http://www.anglican.org.sg/page/2018-year-of-prayer>)

### **What are some common prayer themes that we can all pray for this Lent?**

- (a) *Brokenness of spirit*: the defilement of sin in all of us, our repentance from pride, waywardness and self-reliance; acknowledgement of our failures; and our utter dependence upon the Lord apart from whom we can do nothing (Jn 15: 4-5)
- (b) *Oneness of the body*: the true unity of heart and mind among pastors and leaders at the national level as well as at denominational and local church levels: that we will find a new freedom in the Spirit to forgive one another, to stand with one another and to be content to be nameless.
- (c) *Fruitfulness of the harvest*: that the Lord will wonderfully open the eyes of multitudes of people to behold Jesus as God's appointed King over all the earth and to embrace Him truly as their Lord and Savior so they are ready from conversion to serve Him with their lives.
- (d) *Righteousness in our land*: that the moral gate of our nation will be guarded against the tide of liberalism and licentiousness that is sweeping across the nations, philosophies that promise freedom but entrap humankind in fetters and spread the dust of death over society.

### **Where can you & I begin?**

Let us begin by restoring the practice of secret morning devotion with the Lord (Ps 57:8-11) Let us, with the Holy Spirit's help, enter daily the Tent of Meeting (Ex 33:7-11) through adoring prayer and Bible meditation. When we do so, we will begin to experience the promise of the new covenant that beholding the full glory of God in the image of Jesus Christ, we are "being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor 3:18). What a realm to enter more deeply and explore more fully!

As I start Lent this year with you, I find that God has given me a special anchor text from 1 Tim 6:11-14:

*" But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life... keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ..."*

Do keep me in your prayers too so that we might journey into all that God in His boundless goodness has prepared for us. May we become a channel of REVIVAL to His great praise and glory!

Warmly in Christ,

+Rennis