

### IN THIS ISSUE

OUR IN-HOUSE NEWSLETTER FEATURES ARTICLES, BOOK REVIEWS & NEWS OF INTEREST TWICE PER SEMESTER.



BOOK REVIEW  
PAGE 3



IN & AROUND CTIS  
RECENT NEWS & ITEMS OF INTEREST

# CTIS NEWSLETTER



## Inauguration Mass 2016 - Faculty Profession of Faith

During the Inauguration Mass to open the academic year on 11 January, the Rectors and lecturers of CTIS and SFX Major Seminary solemnly pledged their Faculty Profession of Faith before the Archbishop of Singapore. They recited the Nicene Creed and publicly declared to embrace and strongly uphold every doctrine asserted and declared by the Church on faith and morals, whether by solemn definition or by the ordinary Magisterium, especially those that concern



the mystery of the Holy Church of Christ, His Sacraments, the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Primacy of the Pope. The Mass was held at Ss Mary and Magdalene Rooms, and was attended by more than 130 people, including Board Members, Faculty, students and guests.

## Misericordiae Vultus - Academic Conference

CTIS held an academic conference on *Misericordiae Vultus*, the official proclamation of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy issued by His Holiness

launched Pope Francis. The recently concluded conference, which was primarily in Mandarin, took place on Sunday, 17th January 2016. The conference saw a turnout of about 90 people, comprising mainly of the faculty as well as the students and guests.



The panel was composed of four speakers, with each speaker exploring the theme "Mercy" from a different angle.

(Cont'd next page)



Fr. Valerian Cheong, lecturer of Sacred Scripture, kicked off the conference with the topic “Mercy and Scripture”. Fr. Cheong elucidated how the concept of mercy is portrayed in the Bible, citing examples from both the Old Testament and the New Testament. An example from the Old Testament is the Psalms which extol God’s mercy – while God is a just God, He is also a merciful and loving God (cf. Ps 101), and His compassion is readily available to all who call on His name (cf. Ps 145). As for the New Testament, which expounds the theme of God’s mercy in the light of Christ, we often encounter references to God’s merciful love, tenderness, and forgiveness, especially in the Gospels. One example given by Fr. Cheong was Luke 6:36, in which Jesus exhorts us to “be merciful, just as [our] Father is merciful”.

The second speaker was Fr. Peter Zhang, CDD and a lecturer of Moral Theology, who gave a commentary on the Papal Bull of Indiction, *Misericordiae Vultus*. Summarising *Misericordiae Vultus* using just seven Chinese characters for each chapter, Fr. Zhang provided a thorough, yet concise and unambiguous, overview of the Papal Bull. Interspersed with quotes from scriptures and the saints, as well as real life examples and

experiences, he focused on some key topics such as the misconception of mercy as weakness, the dynamism between mercy and justice, the attitude towards confession and the significance of indulgence.

After all the theological background and input given by the first two speakers, Fr. Kenson Koh, who specialises in Missiology, kept the ball rolling with his exploration of “Mercy and Mission”. Drawing on the Church’s teachings on mission and the new evangelisation, Fr. Koh offered insights and suggestions on how we can put all that we have learnt about God’s love and mercy into practice. For instance, having personally experienced the tender mercy and forgiveness of our Lord, we ought to share His mercy with others through our words, our deeds, as well as the example of our own lives.



The final speaker, Mr. Samuel Ng, the CEO of Montfort Care, picked up where Fr. Koh left off, and continued speaking about putting the mercy of God into action. Mr. Ng gave an overview of the mission and vision of Caritas Singapore, which is the official social and community arm of the Catholic Church in Singapore, and the umbrella body for 24 Catholic charities and social service groups. He introduced the various initiatives undertaken by Caritas Singapore. Caritas affiliates such as St Vincent de Paul Society, ACMI, and Roman Catholic Prison Ministry provide community services without regard to race or religion. Motivated by the unconditional love of God, a wide range of charitable services are provided to the poor, the disabled, the prisoners, the HIV/AIDS victims, the elderly, and even the working poor not earning enough to make ends meet, helping them with their corporal and spiritual needs. Several of these Caritas affiliates are now based at Agape Village, a recently opened facility specifically constructed for providing integrated care services. A series of real life stories encouraged the participants to be more proactive in living out one’s social mission.

As the conference drew to a close, it was evident that this short but intense afternoon had given the participants much food for thought. Wendy Oeij, one of the CTIS Mandarin Diploma students, found the conference “enriching” and “soul-searching”. “The talks ... were very enjoyable and interesting ... [They] challenged me to step out of my comfort zone and expand my boundaries...

Many of the things mentioned are good reminders but [they are] challenging tasks.” Citing James 2:26 – “For just as a body without a spirit is dead, so also

faith without works is dead” – Wendy shared that while it may sound challenging, she has been inspired to “show and share [God’s] mercy till it hurts.

## Book Review Section

**Title: The Spirituality of the  
Second Vatican Council**

**Author: Gerald O'Collins, SJ**

**Publisher: Paulist Press**

**Year of Publication: 2014**

**Pages: 80**

Reviewer: Sister Leticia Lopez, MVD

On December 2015 the Church celebrated the 50th anniversary of the closing of the Second Vatican Council.

If you are wondering: How is the Second Vatican council related to spirituality? And how are the theological themes of the documents link to the life of the faithful? This book will provide a truly insightful answer.

With the genius and clarity that distinguishes the author, the book uncovers the spiritual treasures of

Vatican II. By deepening the very theological themes of the documents, Gerald O'Collins blends both theological depth with spiritual insight. At the same time, his book summarises with impressive lucidity the core of Vatican II spirituality.

It may come as a surprise to have such book written by Fr O'Collins. As the author himself says: "I confess to have belonged until very recently among those who took a deep theological interest in Vatican II but no spiritual interest at all in the council."

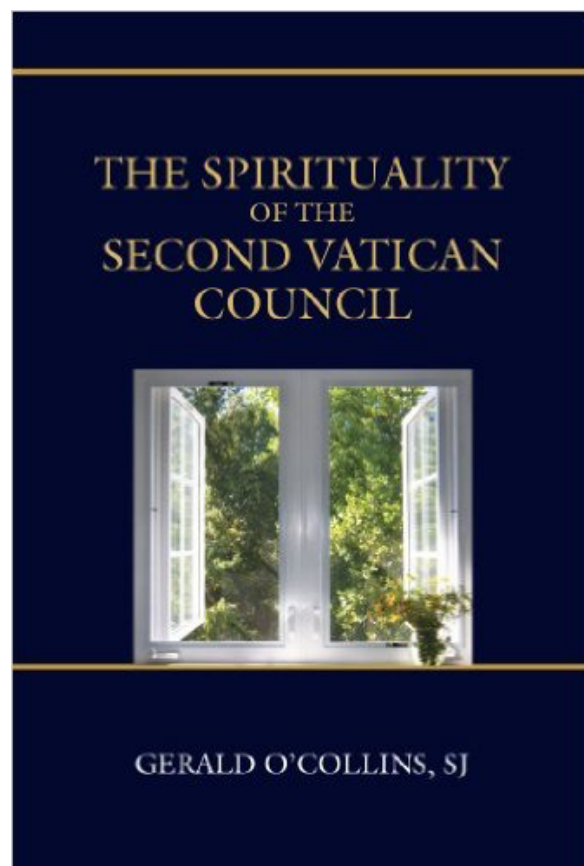
The book offers a systematic presentation of "The Universal Call to Holiness" address to the People of God, which constitutes "the heart of Vatican II spirituality." It describes holiness as "an essential mark of the Church." He makes a sharp distinction between perfection and holiness drawing out from the teachings of the Council, particularly *Lumen Gentium* and affirms that "all Christian Holiness is grounded in the Blessed Trinity."

Such holiness is manifested in the presence of the risen Christ, particularly in the liturgy. "The Second Vatican Council yields a rich spirituality of Christ presence, a spirituality that challenges not only how we think about him but how we act towards others."

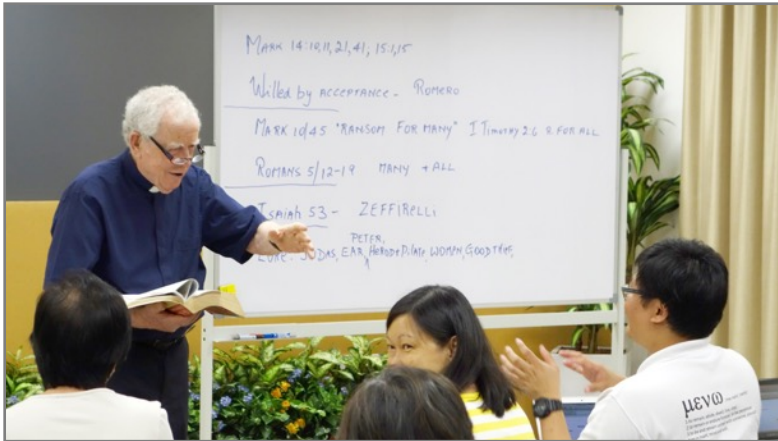
The unity between the Word of God and Bread of life in the liturgical reform came together. "The Council expects that both the Eucharist and the Scriptures will bring fresh impulses to the life of the whole Church and her members." Word and sacrament constitute the bread of life.

Such nourishment impels us to live in the world "sharing in Christ's functions as priest, prophet and king/shepherd."

The rich content of the book, which combines theology and spirituality, is an ideal tool to develop further reflections on the spirituality of Vatican II. I will highly recommend anyone interested in theology and spirituality to pick up and read this book. It will not only illuminate new areas of learning, but will challenge them to go deeper in the understanding of the very essential call of the Second Vatican Council - The Universal Call to Holiness.



(more next page on Fr Gerard O'Collins)



(Fr Collins stressing a point during TH148 Christology class)



(Fr Collins with Fr Gerard Louis and CTIS students)

Fr Gerald O'Collins, SJ is an Australian Jesuit priest, author, academic and educator. He is currently research professor and writer-in-residence at the Jesuit Theological College (JTC in Parkville, Victoria, Australia) and a research professor in theology at St Mary's University College (Twickenham, London, UK). He was professor of systematic and fundamental theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University (Rome) for more than 30 years, and for 6 of those years, served as Dean of the theological faculty of the Gregorian until he retired.

A highly prolific author of more than 50 books, including the highly-recommended textbook *Christology: A Biblical, Historical and Systematic Study of Jesus*, Fr O'Collins last visited CTIS in March 2015 and he gave several lectures on TH148 Christology here. CTIS students are very fortunate to be taught by Fr O'Collins, one of the most famous Catholic theologians alive.

---

## In & around CTIS - news & items of interest

---

### FACEBOOK PAGE

CTIS launched a Facebook Page last year to publicise our courses using social media.

The URL is [facebook.com/ctissingapore](https://facebook.com/ctissingapore)

New students and Friends of CTIS are cordially invited to 'Like' our Page if you have an existing Facebook account. Also invite your own friends on Facebook to 'Like' our Page.

Feel free to post your own queries, comments and feedback there (subject to moderation) on the Page.



### GRADUATION CEREMONY 2016

CTIS will hold its Graduation Ceremony 2016 on Sat 27 February morning. His Grace Abp. William Goh will be will present CTIS certificates and diplomas to the graduands from both the English and Mandarin language streams. As this is the first time CTIS is holding a joint ceremony for both streams, the venue (Ss Mary & Magdalene) is expected to be packed. Graduands may be restricted in the number of family and friends they can invite due to the limited seating capacity.

The study of truth requires considerable effort, which is why few are willing to undertake it out of love of knowledge, despite the fact that God has implanted a natural appetite for such knowledge in the minds of men.

— Thomas Aquinas,  
Summa Contra Gentiles