



Newsletter – October 2023

CFSM Singapore

2 Highland Road, #03-12

Singapore 549102

Website: <http://www.cfsm.org.sg>

Contact email: cfsmsg@gmail.com

Birth and Death and Happiness

When a spouse conceives a child, the family members including the couple will naturally be happy for the new creation. For 9 months, they anticipate and look forward for the arrival of their baby. In between the couple monitor and visit the gynaecologist from time to time without fail. They look forward to the new arrival. It's a long anticipatory moment and usually is a happy moment.

Case 1: Happiness comes to the whole family upon the new arrival of a baby and when the wife has a normal delivery. However, when the baby cries in vain, it causes panic and anxiety to the new parents. Eventually, contingency plans are made to take turns to nurse the baby. The baby faces the new world outside the womb, seeking for the attention and expressing by the sharp cry. Naturally, the baby knows it's a new environment so the baby struggles and cries for comfort and eventually learn to rest together with the mother while being nursed.

Major adjustments have to be made accommodating the growth of the child. At the same time the couple too need the space to breath new air each day. The couple and the child gradually learn to accommodate one another with a turning point in life as responsible parents.

Case 2: After nine months of anticipation and expectation, a young mother was looking forward to her first baby. It was joy upon the birth of the child for a short moment as the baby subsequently died unexpectedly within a few hours. The moment of joy suddenly becomes a great disappointment, pain, grief and sorrow. In life there is always joy and happiness but death of the newly born is something we don't anticipate.

There are many sad incidents even within the womb as an active child could become still-born and in such realities it's even more traumatic, painful and unbelievable. We question ourselves why such things are happening? However, if an elderly member of the family departs with an illness which had been anticipated it causes fewer traumas upon his or her death to his family members.

Case 3: An active parishioner in a family Ministry took his retirement seriously and wanted to do more for the poor, needy and the immigrants' community. That was something he anticipated and visualised. After his retirement he did his best to reach out to the poor and needy. Unexpectedly, he had cancer and eventually died.

Case 4: Suicide. According to Straits Times dated Sunday 10 September 2023, "There were 476 suicides reported in Singapore in 2022 which was the highest figure since 2000. A quarter of the cases involved those aged 10 to 29. This is another high in more than 2 decades."

The teaching of Church tells us that from the time we are baptised with water and be clothed in white clothing symbolising purity and joyful life, we are at the same time reminded to prepare the way for our end stage of life.

During Advent, we prepare joyfully for the birth of Christ. We celebrate Christmas Day. We host Christmas parties.

We then soon come to Lent when Jesus fulfills His Father's Will. He went up the hills to pray in silence and told his disciples to stay awake. However, his disciples didn't know what he was preparing them for. As we meditate on these bible verses, we realise that we too must be alert and be ready everyday as if it's the last day for us on earth. Our Lord has clearly stated that his Second Coming will be at an hour that we do not know.

When we receive the Sacrament of Baptism, our parents are our first faith educators. When we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation we must be ready to bring forward the Good News with conviction to the community around us and to reach out to the marginalised. That's why we are blessed at the end of each mass and are sent to bring the Good News to the others.

The key message to our spirit is to bring forth the Good News or to reach out to the others with Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Trustfulness, Gentleness and Self Discipline as in Galatians Chapter 5, verses 22 to 25.

(Edited version of an article by Francis Tamel Mane)

Seeing Our Situation:

- a. What does birth and death mean to me?
- b. Who is responsible for our faith formation?
- c. Why must we receive the Sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation?
- d. What would be the **consequences** if we don't receive the Baptism and Confirmation?
- e. What would happen if I don't understand the significance of Baptism and confirmation?

Our Personal Reflection

- a. What did I learnt and discover from today's topic of Birth and Death?
- b. Knowing the reality of life how is my attitude and approach towards life and others?
- c. How do I feel and think about it?

Our Christian Reflection

- a. If Christ is present among us today what would be his key challenges and message for us?

“Who do you say I am?”

- b. What does the Bible the Gospel and the Social Teaching of The Church, The Encyclicals, and The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us about the above situation?

Our Responses and Action:

- a. What can I/We do to have a better understanding of our birth and death?
 - b. What can I do for my family, my Parish, the CFSM and Society?
 - c. What can we do as a Movement for a better understanding and preparedness in such incidents of birth and death?
-

Announcement

Faith Formation Session

Topic: “Building the Kingdom of God”

Date: Saturday 4 November 2023

Time: 2pm to 5pm

Venue: The Catholic Centre, Flora Room, 55 Waterloo Street, Singapore