

5^h General Meeting, September 17, 2019

Rev. Fr. Joseph Buzzo, Opus Dei Regional Vicar for East Asia was our Guest Speaker and he spoke to us on “Vocations.”

[Download here for a summary of the talk]

The guest speaker Rev. Fr. Joseph Buzzo was briefly introduced by our Third V.P. Elizabeth Cheng as follows:-

- Born in Uruguay, South America in 1970.
- Got bachelor degree in Computer Science in the University of the Republic (Montevideo, 1993)
- Doctorate in Canon Law in the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome 2005).
- Ordained as a priest in 2005 in Rome and moved back to Uruguay.
- In 2014 moved to Hong Kong and in 2015 appointed Regional Vicar of Opus Dei in East Asia. Opus Dei is a personal prelature of the Catholic Church, present in Hong Kong since 1981, whose founder is St. Josemaria Escriva, a Spanish priest canonized by St. John Paul II in 2002.
- Since his ordination, Fr. Joseph has served in different pastoral works, mainly related with Christian formation and spiritual direction.

Rev. Joseph Buzzo spoke on “Vocations” with many quotations from the Holy Bible and different saints, which cannot be recorded verbatim. Only a brief summary can be provided.

(A) Christian “Vocation”

Behind every Christian is the love of God as mentioned by John, the disciple whom Jesus loved (John 1: 4-10). Thus, a person becomes a Christian not because he loves God, but because God loves him.

Every person asks: “Who is Christ to me?” The real question is “who am I for Christ?”. All the saints have discovered how much man mean to God (John 15: 13-15).

“Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you”.

(B) The Call of God (John 1: 36-39)

The first disciple called by Jesus was Andrew, a follower of John the

Baptist. In turn, Andrew introduced his brother Simon (the son of Jonah). Andrew was keen to follow Jesus but was too shy to admit this. Instead he asked Jesus “Master, where dwellest thou?” Jesus replied “Come and See”. In life, this is often the case – a person comes and sees, and then follows Jesus”

(C) Love Can Redeem A Person

In the novel “La Miserable”. Jean Valjean was invited by Bishop Bienvenue to his home after his release from prison for stealing a loaf of bread for his starving sister. Jean Valjean stole from the Bishop and was caught. Instead the Bishop gave him a chance to reform himself by saying that the silverware was given to him by the Bishop. This love turned Jean Valjean into a reformed and good person who went on and helped other unfortunate souls.

A person can strive to know Jesus better through prayers and Holy Communion. By setting aside some time to talk to God, we can get to know God better as a friend. We have all experienced how deeply a true friendship can change us!

(D) Call from God

Throughout history God has called out to man:-

- (i) Abraham (Gen 12:1-2)
- (ii) Jacob (Is 43:1)
- (iii) Isaiah (Is 49:1)

The founder of Opus Dei St. Josemaria Escriva wrote: “When He asks us for something, in reality He is offering us a gift. We are not doing God a favour. It is God who illuminates us”.

Vocation must be given freely. It is to live with God. When choosing a candidate, St. Escriva required two conditions:-

- (a) to live with Christ and
- (b) to go and preach this message to others.

As Jesus instructed his disciples: - “Go ye, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit”.

God has given men free will – free to commit sins, but also free to love God. Vocation is not a passive action like standing on a conveyer’s belt, but a constant will to go forward. God never gives us a carefully scripted life.

(E) Discernment of Religious Vocation

- (i) Humility (Mt. 19: 16-21)
- (ii) Discernment and spiritual direction
- (iii) Personal sacrifice (Luke 1: 38) – like Mary, “be it done according to your will”.

This inspiring and theologically profound talk was followed by sharing by Serran Denis Chang.