



Newsletter – April 2022

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Covid- 19 “Isolation” At Home

SEE

The Covid-19 pandemic is causing serious stress and strain in our society and in particular in Singapore. We come across the different dimensions in living together as a family and as families in a society. At times we experience sadness and disappointments. We have come across the proverb “All that glitters is not gold”. Thus, we are happy when we are at home with our other family members and neighbours but we also realize that this is not always true.

During pre-pandemic times, we did not experience any “isolation” at home, whether personally or as a family. We are able to go wherever we like, meet whoever we want to meet, eat whatever we want and stay wherever we like. We had personal freedom. Our families had their freedom as families. Timing is not a limiting factor. When we go to our workplace, we meet our colleagues and have lots of things to share. And for many families, the time at home is really quality time. However, now with the pandemic, many of us have lost the freedom and have been “isolated” from our family members and colleagues in many ways. Furthermore, in the beginning phase of the pandemic, covid patients were sent to dedicated facilities to recover. As time went on, the Ministry of Health (MOH) decided that covid patients can recover at home. Staying in dedicated facilities has its advantages and disadvantages. However, recovering at home also has its pros and cons. The challenges faced by patients when recovering from the illness at home are more damaging and dangerous to unity and love in the family. For Catholics, we believe the family is the domestic church and the foundation of society. As such any assault on the family and the family values must be prevented and practical solutions to the painful issues must be found.

During the Circuit Breaker period (the lockdown), the challenges became more obvious and predictable. The disputes between family members cuts across the whole spectrum of the household duties such as cleaning, cooking and caring for the babies, young children and elderly parents, grandparents, as well as the extended family members. Family members quarrel over small matters and only enhance their personal “isolation”. The small floor areas of Housing and Development Board flats (HDB flats) can make this “isolation” unbearable. Three-room HDB flats are normally between 60 to 68

square metres and 4-room HDB flats are normally between 85 to 93 square metres. The challenges faced also depend on the number of family members residing in each HDB flat. In addition, many of us work from home either all of our working days or at least twice per week.

It was also reported in the Straits Times dated 11 March 2022 that “isolation” at home during this pandemic as led to disputes between neighbours in the residential areas. Nerves get frayed when one is confined at home for a long time and there grows intolerance for noise or disorderly behaviour from neighbours.

On a positive note, isolation at home as prescribed by MOH frees the hospital beds in the various hospitals in Singapore, both public and private and eases the burden on the doctors and nurses. There is also less need for dedicated facilities. Increased attention and care is given to the more seriously ill-patients and the more needy patients. Those who recover at home take a greater personal responsibility for their health. The chances of spreading the infection are kept to a minimum. The relationship between the family members are further re-evaluated and strengthened. They also help each other and ease the burdens that come with being confined in a home. While being at home, we also learn to order food and groceries online using the relevant applications. We learn the ever changing technological methods and equip ourselves well for the future.

Therefore, in reality, is this idea of “isolation” just an idea in the mind? As Catholics, we believe that God is always near us and we are not alone. We journey our life with our Lord Jesus to fulfil the plans God has for us.

Pope Francis said during this year’s New Year Day message that “We are still living in uncertain and difficult times due to the pandemic.” and ”Many are frightened about the future and burdened by social problems, personal problems, dangers stemming from the ecological crisis, injustices and by global economic imbalances.” Peace, the pope said, “demands concrete actions. It is built by being attentive to the least, by promoting justice, with the courage to forgive, thus extinguishing the fire of hatred.” Pope Francis also championed embracing a positive attitude, “one that always sees, in the Church as well as in society, not the evil which divides us, but the good that unites us.” (Report dated 1 January 2022 by The Associated Press).

Our Situation

- a. How did I experience this pandemic within my family, within my neighbourhood and at my workplace? What are the causes for these experiences?
- b. What would be the consequences if the situation remains in Singapore or at the global level? Please share your views.

JUDGE

Personal Reflection

- a. How do I feel personally about the current reality?
- b. What were the new aspects I had learnt or discovered from the above reality?
- c. Have I taken the opportunity to grow my Catholic faith?

Christian Reflection

- a. If Jesus is present among us what would be his key message for all of us about this reality of being “trapped” or “isolated”?
- b. What does the Gospel, The Social Teachings of The Church, The Catechism of The Catholic Church and the Encyclicals tells us about this reality?
- c. Do I believe that God is still in charge and this is an opportunity for me to draw closer to Him?

OUR RESPONSE AND ACTION

- a. How can I eliminate all notions of isolation and loneliness in my family? In my neighbourhood?
- b. What can I do for the Parish and Society after knowing the reality?
- c. What can the Movement do after being aware of this reality?



Announcements

1. Synod Feedback

Catholics all over the world are invited to journey together in a way that allows the whole Church to listen to each other’s faith experiences, joys and challenges. This way is known as the Synod. It calls on us to pray and reflect, and then share and listen to what God’s Will might be for the Church going forward.

CFSM will be contributing our inputs via our members’ participation. Each base group is invited to provide inputs before the end of April 2022. CFSM base group leaders will be reaching out to you. Please support and participate actively.

2. CFSM 60th Anniversary 2022

CFSM will be observing her 60th anniversary this year. A subcommittee has been formed for year-long activities and a finale celebration to be held on 24th Sept 2022. If you interested to be part of the organizing committee please reach out to Luke @ 97842891

3. Feast of St Joseph, the Worker, Sunday 1 May 2022

The St Francis of Assisi base group will be organizing the above annual event for this year.

Date: Sunday 1 May 2022

Time: 9.30am to 1.30pm

Venue: Church of St Joesph (Upper Bukit Timah), St Cornelius room

Capacity: 59 persons

All are welcome.
