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心灵相簿

The President's Gallery

受苦的道路

The Journey of Suffering

大斋节预备我们进入圣周，面对耶稣的受苦、受难及复活。

在这期间基督徒进行反省，面对自己的罪在上帝面前认罪悔改。基督徒也默想耶稣所行，尤其是祂最后一周的行程。在教会传统里默想耶稣的受苦受难，或称十架苦路，是重要的灵性塑造过程。

默想耶稣受难的十架苦路并在生活中经历背十字架的苦难是基督徒生命成长的必要途径。这和耶稣为救赎我们必须走这条受苦受难的道路一样让人不解和震惊。

今天我们所处的时代，只喜欢得胜的欢呼不要受苦的煎熬。这使信仰和生活脱节，因为现实的生活中有太多的苦难；许多让人不能理解的事发生在我们身上。若我们只宣告得胜的基督带给人们生命的更新和力量，忽略了耶稣的受苦受难，那是我们还未认识到耶稣的受难亦是上帝对每个时代的人的祝福。

你认为耶稣走十架苦路是多余的吗？只是为了之后能复活吗？你以为受苦受难的道路本身是没有价值和意义，纯然是人犯罪后的咒诅吗？怪不得当苦难来临到时，我们呼叫上帝：上帝阿！你在那里？你真的存在吗？为什么是我？耶稣的受苦受难是上帝对人类苦难的救赎。当我们越能进入耶稣的受苦受难经历，我们就越能得医治，从苦难中蒙救赎、得释放。

近几个月来脸上偶发脓疮，出国前看了医生但红肿已经开始疼痛，没想到两天后它“熟了”破

裂，脓血开始流出。当地的人都劝我要到医院处理一下伤口因为面积蛮大，所以我到医院急诊部挂号。医生帮我清理了伤口。隔天回去复诊，当医生打开纱布，才赫然发现脸上竟然有一个不小的洞。心想医生不会要我缝针吧！隔两天再来一次复诊，医生说伤口复合进展良好。

当我自己清理伤口换纱布，我试着寻找脸上生脓的原因，我从来没有皮肤问题。在我的不解与担忧中，我看着脸上的洞，忽然看见了耶稣手上的洞。我的洞实在太小了。耶稣的钉痕手对我有了新一层的感受和意义，我顿时豁然并对这小洞产生了莫名的接纳。

耶稣的受难与复活是不可切割的一体。欠缺任何一边，福音就不完整，生命未能丰盛，更不能成为他人的祝福。

望着东京窗外的自由女神像，许多人忙碌着拍照留念，灯柱上的鸟儿静静地看，早开了的樱花似乎对那女神下的人们伸出邀请，“到我这里来”。真理和自由原是一起的，但当我们只要自由不要真理，我们就走向毁灭。

在美国 St. Louis，联合卫理公会特别年议会的决议，保留卫理公会现有的立场——认为同性恋行为不符基督教的教导。这让我感到欢欣，也同样感到伤痛。同性恋者为具有神圣价值的人。他们需要教会的牧养和引导，并在教会的关爱中，得着属灵与情绪方面的支持。希望不会因为这议会而造成教徒离开卫理教堂。愿上帝的爱医治并复兴他的教会。

会长摄于2019年3月日本东京自由女神景点。

Photo of the Odaiba Statue of Liberty, taken by President in March 2019 in Tokyo, Japan.

Lent is a period to prepare our hearts as we enter the Holy Week, a time when we are reminded of the suffering, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. During this special season, Christians take time to reflect, and to repent of their sins before God. We meditate on the words and deeds of Jesus, and in particular, reflect on what transpired during the final week of Jesus' journey.

To Christians, meditating upon the suffering and crucifixion of Jesus is an important part of our spiritual formation. Understanding the significance of the crucifixion of Jesus, and relating that to our personal episodes of setbacks, are ways that we carry the cross in our daily lives. It is a necessary part in our growth as Christians. It is often difficult to comprehend why Jesus needed to go through so much pain, leading to his death on the cross, in exchange for our salvation and redemption.

In the world we live in today, we prefer to celebrate victories but not to acknowledge adversities. This leads to a detachment between faith and reality. In life, we experience setbacks. Without a good faith grounding, we find it difficult to understand these trials. If we only proclaim the good news of Jesus' resurrection and yet ignore the message of His suffering on the cross, we would have failed in understanding that Jesus' crucifixion is at the heart of the blessing that God had intended for all generations.

Do you wonder if Jesus' suffering was unnecessary? Was it just to demonstrate His resurrection? Do you question why you need to suffer? Do you ask if the struggles you face is because you are being punished for your sins? Do you cry out, "Lord, Lord, where are you? Are You real and do You exist? Why me, Lord?"

The suffering and crucifixion of Jesus is God's way to prepare us for the pain and struggles that we face as humans. Only when we deeply understand Jesus' suffering on the cross, can we start to receive true healing and receive the redemption and deliverance from God for all our suffering.

Recently, I developed a cystic acne near my chin. Despite having visited the doctor before my travels, the cyst swelled and eventually ruptured while I was in Taiwan. I sought treatment at a local hospital because the lesion had become fairly large. I checked into A&E for treatment. The doctor cleaned

the wound and requested for me to return for a follow up. When the doctor removed the bandage, the lesion was still a large gaping hole. I was worried that the doctor would need to hold me back for stitches. Thankfully, when I returned for the next review, the wound had healed.

Whenever I cleaned my wound and removed my bandages, I would search for the reason behind the skin infection. As I looked at the large "hole" on my face, worried that there may be deeper underlying conditions, I suddenly saw the pierced hands of Jesus. The wound that I carried became so insignificant. This led me to a new level of appreciation for the wounds on Jesus' pierced hands. Instantly, I could accept the discomfort of the wound on my skin.

Jesus' suffering and resurrection cannot be separated. Without one or the other, the Gospel will not be complete. We will not be living our lives in fullness, and we will not be the blessing to others that God intended us to be.

This photograph shows a view of the Odaiba Statue of Liberty from the Tokyo cafe where I am writing this from. Those who pass the Statue of Liberty were busy taking photographs, capturing this precious sight. The birds on the street-lamps observed these activities quietly, the cherry blossoms swayed gently in the winds, as if they were inviting those who have come to pay homage to the iconic Lady Liberty to "come to me". Truth and Freedom are inseparable. Yet, when we choose to adopt only Freedom, rejecting to accept the Truth, we have set ourselves on a path towards destruction.

The recent voting results of the Special Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) held at St Louis, USA, brought much jubilation and yet also pained me greatly. Our stand as a Methodist body had prevailed – that the practice of homosexuality was incompatible with Christian teachings. However, we must recognise that homosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth, who need the ministry and guidance of the Church as well as the spiritual and emotional support of a caring fellowship. I hope that this monumental decision does not fragment the Church and lead to Methodists leaving the Church. May the love of God bring healing and reconciliation for His church.