



"The Arts as Acts of Praise and Worship Workshop"



1. Opening Prayer : Heart speaks unto Heart

I want to devote my heart to you Lord. I want You to be in my heart always.

With Your Sacred Heart in me:-

I can see beauty in everything around me;

I can have courage to face my fear;

I can have compassion when I just want to look away;

I can have peace and be your peace-maker;

I can be authentic and be your servant;

I can love and accept other people's love;

I can have joy and spread Your Good News.

I want to devote my heart to you Lord. I want You to be in my heart always.

2. Praise the Lord for creating us as Human beings

"Here I am Lord,

Waiting for You,
Watching for You,
Trusting in You,
Lord of my Life.

Light in my darkness.
My Guide, my friend,
Love of my Heart
and my Soul."

God of our moments

My Lord, my God, my Friend, my Maker

You make the branches of the trees sway in perfect rhythm

My mornings are filled with music from the birds of the air

Even the best of human technologies cannot match your work

As I appreciate the beauty of your creation today

Help me to realise that you have created me with even greater beauty

Help me to reach into my heart and praise you from deep within me

Hold me and keep me every faithful to your most loving heart

3. Scripture Reading: from the Acts of the Apostles Chapter 2 : 1-17

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, ² and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, ³ which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, ⁴ as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven staying in Jerusalem. At this sound, they gathered in a large crowd, but they were confused because each one heard them speaking in his own language. They were astounded, and in amazement they asked, "Are not all these people who are speaking Galileans? Then how does each of us hear them in his own native language? We are Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya near Cyrene, as well as travelers from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs, yet we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God." They were all astounded and bewildered, and said to one another, "What does this mean?" But others said, scoffing, "They have had too much new wine." Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice, and proclaimed to them, "You who are Jews, indeed all of you staying in Jerusalem. Let this be known to you, and listen to my words. These people are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'It will come to pass in the last days,' God says, 'that I will pour out a portion of my spirit upon all flesh. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. Indeed, upon my servants and my handmaids I will pour out a portion of my spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy.

4. A prayer in thanksgiving for our talents

Heavenly Father

In your goodness and love for us, you have given wonderful and varied talents to each of us.

We thank you for your generosity, and we praise you for the gifts and talents that you have blessed us with.

Help us to understand that the talents we have should be used to benefit others and to spread the love of Christ to all.

Holy Spirit

Be our inspiration and guide. Show us how to use our talents to touch hearts and teach minds in your service.

May we never hide the light of our God-given abilities away from the world, nor bury our talents in the ground.

Encourage us Lord, instead to be humble and to share our gifts generously with everyone around us, to the greater glory of God.

We make this prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ

Amen.

Talents Talk

God gave us all some talents, though none may have the same.

Exciting is the prospect, that some certainly find fame.

Each and every person has potential to be great.

It isn't just a question of luck or trick of fate.

We must nurture all the gifts we see each other show.

For talent just like flowers can wither and not grow.

Acknowledge in a child, the talents that arise.

Encourage all that's good, a truly worthwhile prize.

To fulfil our role in life, we must seek to ask our Lord.

Let our talents work for Christ, not for personal reward.

Heart Speaks unto Heart (Spiritual Reflection)

The heart is the body's vital organ. But it also seen as the emotional centre of one's being. "Heart" (Hebrew *leb*; Greek *kardia*) occurs approximately one thousand times in the Bible, but the range of meaning is great. The connotations of the word: heart are not the same in Hebrew and English. In our present use of word hardly anything is suggested except the affective life while in Hebrew the heart is understood as the *inside* of man. Apart from feelings the heart contains memories and ideas, plans and decisions.

God has given men "a heart to think with" and the psalmist speaks of the, "thoughts of the heart" of God Himself meaning His plan of Salvation. In the book of Kings we find written "big heart" which continues "give me your heart", can mean, "give me your attention" and on the other side of the coin a hardened heart includes the idea of a closed mind. This means that in our selves that our heart which is the core has a choice either to accept his responsibilities and opens himself or closes himself to God. As Pope Benedict refers to our culture that is a culture of dead, to continue on this we are living in a culture of destruction that tries to silence God's words or rejecting God into a private life. Today to speak about God or religion it become something unusual or strange everything have the right to make his own news and we lost direction, for example there was a programme on radio and when it was time to refer to God he said and "now we will talk about the man in the sky".

GOD'S PRIMARY CONCERN IS WITH THE HEART.

Although we are living in this culture as human beings, God have made with us a covenant of love. By covenant means the faithfulness of God with the unfaithfulness of human beings. In the book of Jeremiah we find: "This is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel on that day," says the LORD. "I will put my laws in their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people." Let us see how God's worked in the Old Testament: Saul was tall and handsome; he was an impressive-looking man. Samuel may have been trying to find someone who looked like Saul to be Israel's next king, but God warned him against judging by appearance alone. When people judge by outward appearance, they may overlook quality individuals who lack the particular physical qualities society currently admires. Appearance doesn't reveal what people are really like or their true value.

Fortunately, God judges by faith and character, not appearances. And because only God can see on the inside, only he can accurately judge people. Most people spend hours each week maintaining their outward appearance; we should do more to develop our inner character. While everyone can see your face, only you and God knows what your heart really looks like.

To understand more God's love for us I can share with you this story: there was a saying of the desert fathers, when your brother monk fell asleep during the morning prayer what should you do? And these fathers would say don't nudge him, let him sleep but allow his head to cradle into your arms. God is the same with us he opens his hands for us and allows us to cradle in his hands. Love is not just a response it is an initiative. It is a gift that always has its origin in God. Let us look at ourselves, we are divided in our Love: we like a person very much 90%, in an ordinary way 50% or very little 20%. God does not mean love but to love totally 100%. God loved us into being. His love is not an activity. It is a whole self. Love is the only energy, the only force able to change the world. If you love your enemies with a pure and generous heart it means that you really know God. If you have faith but do not love your brother, then you are not a true believer. God does not dwell in you. Today young people are searching for something, and there is a great hunger among people. I would like to share with you an experience, last night I met a friend who was not a Catholic but when we were speaking he said to me: "I cannot be a Catholic because sometimes I cannot see any goodness in them". And this is our call today to be authentic and good models. Two examples which can help us are

1. To find a moment to **listen to God's word**, more often. Listen and allow him to love you. We are sick in our human nature we need Redemption we need a Redeemer. It is essential to listen to our teacher telling us what to do, how we can act and love.
2. Our call as a Christian is individual but also within the Church we need **to find support** from each other, like the first community of disciples who were united in prayer and work. We are all on the same journey the same pilgrimage and need support.

I would like to conclude with the words of Saint Augustine -"You have made us for yourself, O lord and our heart is restless until its rests in you".

5. Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Lord -we open up our hearts to you and ask you to speak and inspire us to express the beauty of your world through the gifts we have received from the generosity of your love.

Prepare us and fill us with your Spirit so that through the work of our hands we can share with others our vision of your true Glory.

6. Final Prayer

Dear Lord, We began our Session by acknowledging that every good thing comes from YOU. You open your loving sacred heart to us and invite us to respond.

If we "listen" with our hearts WE can be transformed.

Almighty God and Father now we give thanks to you for the wide variety of our gifts and talents displayed around our church. Each one has been inspired by the Holy Spirit calling us to holiness.

This is truly a result of Heart speaking to Heart as we communicated with God and each other by this use of our Gifts.

Pope Benedict has urged us to continue this closeness to God. Just as the heart is the vital organ in our body so is our loving heart vital to our relationship with OUR LOVING LORD. AMEN

❖ **Prayers prepared for The Arts as Acts of Praise and Worship Workshop by:**
Kenneth Chan, Mary Quinn, Mayoma Onwochei, Wayne Du Preez, Sarah May,
Cecilia Skudder, Noreen Gillespie