27th September 2021

THANK YOU so much ASW! Your first lecture series presented by Fr. Niphot and his most life-giving team is simply BRILLIANT and LIFE TRANSFORMING!! I have learnt so much from it and was so touched by the many presenters, who have helped me to view my faith and mission with new eyes. They have also invited me to recognize the sacred in everyday realities. Fr. Niphot, Dr. Sunthorn and Mdm. Siriwanhas deepened my understanding and application of the pastoral spiral process, when they describe in concrete ways how it can be lived out dynamically in an inter faith and intercultural context. I am truly inspired by this dynamic Divine-People partnership translated through the Organic Intellectual (O.I) Program or People Movement, and recognize the importance of tapping into the collective wisdom of our ancestors and elders, to address contemporary challenges in modern society. I have learnt to respond to the cries of the earth and the poor, TOGETHER with my brothers and sisters from different faiths, cultures and traditions, and reclaim the centrality of GOD in a world, which is currently experiencing an eclipse of the sense of God.

I am especially struck by Father Niphot’s depiction of the symbolism of the Paschal mystery in the process of rice planting. I am enthralled with his reminder of how a single grain of rice has to die many times before it can be food or source of nourishment for us. I cannot help but draw parallels between Bread in the Eucharist (Christian Belief) and the offering of the Buddhists devotees of the nine grains of rice, namely, For:- 1) Self, 2) Family, 3) Relatives and Friends, 4) Poor and Needy, 5) Build Community, 6) Exchange for Necessary Things, 7) Ordination of Children in Religious Formation, 8) Offering to ancestors who passed away and specially 9) For the Messianic Society to come! (The Buddhists also awaits the second coming of the Maitreya Buddha)

WOW! This explanation has changed my entire worldview about the centrality of RICE in Everyday lives. In a world of keto and all other forms of diet, where it is not encouraged to eat rice and other forms of carbohydrates, I cannot help but now see RICE AS SACRED! Eating rice is BEING ONE WITH THE DIVINE and ALL OF GOD’S CREATION! When I eat rice, I am in communion with all the elements of Mother Earth. I receive the blessings of the air, sunlight, rain, soil, the toil of the farmers, their hopes and dreams. I am connected with all our departed ancestors, angels and saints in the heavenly realm, all who are living, PLUS I am in communion with God, as God guides me towards building the Messianic Kingdom to come!

YES, like bread in the Eucharist, I become the food that I eat. Filled with Divine Power, I now become the sacrament of God in todays “wounded” world. My “YES” to God is needed to bring about lasting and positive changes in a world, to create a new humanity and a new earth. YES!! how privileged I feel to be invited as co-creators with God to partake in salvation history, to usher, in my little way, the Kingdom of God to come.

Warmest greetings from a grateful sister in Christ from Malaysia, Cheryl Lee.