

COMPETE WITH HORSES^[1]

"If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses?" Jeremiah 12:5

When we are invited to further commitment, I have often received some discouraged and despaired expressions such as 'I am just a layman', 'I am just a housewife', 'I am not ordained', 'I am only a priest of a small church', 'I only have a primary education', 'I am not a PCC member', 'I am not a graduate', 'I am not the bishop', etc. What has really gone wrong? Are the degree, position and title really that important?

In the book of Jeremiah, the Lord told the Prophet Jeremiah that there is a way where he can actually compete with horses. I believe we can also learn of this secret which can us stride over normal human paces to the paces of horses. The Lord too has reiterated His call and we are reminded to stay focus: "Break up your unploughed ground and do not sow among thorns."^[1]

1.0 THE UNPLOUGHED GROUND

Our Diocese will be 40 years old next year. We were once part of the Diocese of Singapore which is celebrating her 100th Anniversary this November. In 1869, the Diocese of Labuan, Sarawak and Singapore was formed out of the Diocese of Calcutta; and in 1909, the Diocese of Singapore (and later the name Malaya was added to it) was formed; later in 1970, the Diocese of West Malaysia was formed.^[2] A quick glance will tell us that it has taken an average of 50 years for the creation of a new diocese. By the year 2020, our Diocese will be celebrating her golden jubilee. I foresee that unless something is done with focus and concerted efforts, we are not going to see any new healthy diocese birthing from our Diocese.

^[1] *The idea of this title comes from the book: Eugene Peterson, Run With The Horses, IVP, Downers Grove, Illinios, 1983.*

2

Jeremiah

4:3

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop_of_Kuching (Letters Patent was issued on [6 August 1855](#), erecting the "Island of Labuan and its Dependencies into a Bishop's See or Diocese to be styled the Bishopric of Labuan." McDougall was nominated by the Crown as the first bishop, and was consecrated on [18 October 1855](#) in [Calcutta](#). On the [1 January 1856](#) he was appointed bishop of Sarawak. The linked diocese of Labuan and bishopric of Sarawak increased in size as the state of Sarawak grew, and Anglican work in North Borneo and [Brunei](#) developed. It extended further when, by an Act of Parliament in 1869, the Church in the Straits Settlements (Singapore, Penang and Malacca) was separated from the See of Calcutta and placed under the episcopal care of the bishop of Labuan. This arrangement lasted into 1909, when the diocese of Singapore was founded.)
⁴ The province of West Malaysia is an integral part of the Province of the Church of South East Asia. It is not intended to be an independent Province because its jurisdiction only covers a part of a national country. Note that it is spell with a small 'p' against the big 'P' which is reserved for an area which covers one national country or a few national countries.

Instead of creating a new diocese, let us 'compete with horses' to see whether the creation of the province of West Malaysia by 2020 is possible or not. ^[3] This can only be done with the whole Diocese in agreement and sharing and moving together on 'horse's paces'. We will do this, with the help of the Holy Spirit. Do you think we can do it? Can we join hands to see the reality of this by 2020?

But first, let me remind us of some basic regulations which we must adhere to. The Provincial Constitution has stated that a new diocese must have a minimum of 6 parishes with an electoral roll of 100 each and financially viable to support a new diocese.^[4] This is just the minimum requirement. Let me be bold to recommend to us to work towards a minimum of 2000 electoral roll members i.e. 20 parishes of 100 each. On one hand, we need the numbers so that any people movement will not have any serious repercussion. On the other hand, we need the size for financial and personnel stability.

Looking at the present state of our Diocese, there is a long way for us to go before reaching the basic requirement. In order to create a province, the Anglican Consultative Council has stipulated that the minimum number of dioceses to form a province is 4. Presently, only two archdeaconries have barely met the minimum requirement to become dioceses. Though we have the total combined membership to form a province, this is still premature. The membership distribution is not evenly spread. The north, south and east are far from the minimum requirement. Lot of work is needed. The target of 200 new church plants in 10 years is actually helping it to meander along the concept of the creation of a province but more of these new churches should be planted in the north, south and east. 30 new works have been initiated since 2007 Synod. All of them need much nurturing and help. All of them will need some time to grow and consolidate before we can see some of these church plants becoming viable parishes. It seems that we are moving in the right direction. If we allow nature to take its course, we may have to wait for a long time to see some fruits. We have been slow moving. It is time for us to move at a faster pace, and we can do it.

1.1 WHY PROVINCE AND NOT DIOCESES ONLY?

There is no problem at all for us to divide the present Diocese into two dioceses along the boundaries of Selangor and Perak; one in the north from Perak to Perlis, and the other in the south from Selangor to Johor including the eastern states. The difficulty lies in the Parliament Incorporation Act. Which diocese will retain the Act? Sensing the present political atmosphere, the possibility of having both dioceses to be under the Parliament Incorporation Act is virtually nil. The best option forward is to wait till we can be divided into 4 dioceses and at the same time form a province. This will reduce the risk of losing the Parliament Incorporation Act entirely instead it should improve the possibility of the application for a slight amendment to the Parliament Incorporation Act.^[5] In this way, all the new dioceses will have the same privilege. This can avoid the potential struggle of recognition by the relevant authorities. We have seen the wisdom of the Roman Catholic Church having placed all under one umbrella – the Roman Catholic Church in West Malaysia.

In the creation of a province, we can be assured that the properties and assets are fully vested in the name of the province. I can foresee the difficulty in the distribution of wealth and properties in a fair manner if we are to do it any other way. In the setting up of a province, we have to work out a proper system for the sharing of wealth and resources otherwise it can also lead to a potential disaster. The province can also assist in the growth and ministry of every diocese. This is a more beneficial way especially for the dioceses which do not have the resources or situated not in a prominent state.

The urbanization in our country is not helping our plan very much. But, if we can divide our diocese according to the boundaries of the states, we can then make sure that there is a major city or economic hub within each diocese where people can be attracted to. For discussion purposes, I would wish to tentatively propose that the 4 new dioceses to be considered are: one – Selangor, Kuala Lumpur, Putra Jaya and Pahang; two – Perak and Kelantan; three – Penang, Kedah, Perlis and Terengganu; four – Negri Sembilan, Melaka and Johor. The first one will have Kuala Lumpur as its centre; the second with Ipoh; the third with George Town; and the fourth with Johor Bahru. This does sound logical but we too can create an extra missionary diocese of the East Coast states. This will depend heavily on the future development of the three east coast states. The delineation exercise can come later once we have adopted the general concept. If this Synod is in favour, it needs to give the approval of the setting up of a committee to study the possibility of the formation of a province of West Malaysia. This will possibly take 10 years to see the realization of it.

1.2 HOW FAR ARE WE?

With a quick glance at the Synod report, we can see that only the Upper Central Archdeaconry is ready to form a diocese, while others still have to work very hard at it. The breakdown in Appendix A shows us a picture that we must work extra hard in order to get to the minimum expected level for the formation of dioceses. There are at least three aspects to work at urgently.

1.2.1 Membership

The whole diocese presently needs to conscientiously work together as a family to expand and reach out to areas where there is no church. First, we need to study and identify potential areas and towns within each Archdeaconry and then systematically and intentionally strategise by sending teams and prayer groups and workers to these areas. Direct confrontational evangelism has proven inappropriate in modern times. In the post modern 21st Century, we can approach the non-believers through a wide variety of ways, such as, cyber evangelism, music and songs, video/movie, literature, social & welfare, visitation, caring and hospital visitation, games & telematch, tuition, sports, training and seminar, life camps, community awareness projects, open houses, children care & Sunday School, cooking demonstration, spirituality sessions, etc. There is no one way to reach the masses. Sometimes we need to change the traditional methods with some new ideas or commonly known as 'fresh expressions'. Other times we may bring back the old former traditional ways. The whole idea is to be Relevant and Useful to the community. We must learn from the former Archbishop of Canterbury William Templer's wisdom and advice: 'The Christian Church is the only co-operative society that exists for the benefit of its non-members.'[\[6\]](#) There are lots of changes needed for our church programmes and activities, as well as our mindset. Gary McIntosh in his book, 'One Church Four Generations', introduces various models of 'inter-generation' churches, which can accommodate modern multiple generations.[\[7\]](#) It has to begin from our leaders down to every member in the pews. The mindset of clergy dependency needs to be replaced by clergy-laity shared ministry.[\[8\]](#) The idea of Lay Pastor is to create a healthy balance of clergy and laity joint leadership within the church.[\[9\]](#) I wish to thank God for the numerous supports I have received especially when I have issued nearly 200 Lay Pastor's licenses so far. Last year our Lay Pastors' School was attended by 17 people. I believe that the Lay Pastors' School will increase many folds. My desire is to see that the Lay Pastors' School will be conducted in different languages for the benefit of many. The BM, Chinese and Tamil have also been asked to look into this area. The Lay Pastors' School is specially designed as a four year series for the equipping of Lay Pastors.[\[10\]](#)

1.2.2 Workers

The persistent lack of workers is an age old problem for the church of Jesus Christ. Our Diocese is not spared too. This problem was there ever since before the formation of this Diocese, even in Jesus' time.[\[11\]](#) It is an issue of 'the chicken and the egg'. On one hand, all churches want pastors but where do we get pastors, unless churches raise up potential workers and send them for training. On the other hand, most of our churches do not have a culture of sending potential pastor candidates for seminary training but they all want to have the best pastor in town. It is a complex and ironic matter. Sometimes it is very difficult for the Bishop to send his priests/deaconesses because the parishes wish to choose or reject the candidate proposed by the Bishop. By right, if a church does not send anyone for seminary training, it should not exercise the right to choose. One of the keys to a successful church is the number of candidates sent for seminary training. If we want to have good pastors then we must send the best, perhaps, beginning from those in the PCC. With the privilege of sending the best then we can expect to receive the best. For this reason, the Diocesan Strategy Implementation Commission (DSIC) has agreed to improve the prerequisite for ordination. By 2013, the minimum qualification for ordination for the Non Stipendiary Ministry (NSM) will be raised to the level of Diploma in Theology or equivalent. Hence, I am studying the possibility of creating a new position which is a subset of the NSM which is widely practiced in UK and many Anglican Churches in the Communion. It is known as the Local Ordained Ministry (LOM).

The LOM priest is not a member of the Diocesan Synod and does not have the right to attend Synod. He is ordained to serve the 'local' church where he belongs. He is not allowed to serve in another church other than his own. He will only be issued the 'Particular' license to the local church and not the 'General' license i.e. to serve in the whole diocese. This privilege is given as an interim measure so that it does not upset the composition of the 'Houses' in the Synod. The minimum qualification is a Certificate of Theology or equivalent. Obviously, I am not instigating or

creating tensions among the priesthood. There may be some potential hiccups which require serious careful and thoughtful considerations before implementation. My original intention is to offer help to our sacramental church without changing its philosophy and practices. If the new concept is going to be a potential disaster then I will rather shy away from implementing it.

2.0 THE POTTER AND THE CLAY

In Jeremiah's Israel, the potter's house was a significant fixture in every community. In the hands of the potter the formless mass of clay were transformed into the beautiful vessel of value and usefulness. Spiritually, God the Potter does the same with us; it connects the visible to the invisible. Similarly, it is not just the transformation of a person that we are looking for but into a servant created in the image of God.[\[12\]](#)

2.1 Transformation through Theological Education

The traditional route through STM is still our first choice. In order to assure to have good candidates for the priesthood, we are adopting a policy of sending young candidates to parishes as evangelists for two years before admitting in STM. I am also very happy to see many of my priests upgrading themselves. It is my hope that in the near future, people will speak highly of the Anglican priests. Of course, a pure dependency on theological education itself cannot produce good priests. We do not only want to see our people becoming academic theologians only but we, too, must be relevant and practical theologians to the people in the street. We must be 'prophetic theologians' who can interpret the signs of the times and the message of God for these times, such as March 8 event, Global financial meltdown, Global environment changes, the Resurgence of religions, the 1Malaysia policy, the Race Relations in Malaysia, etc.

We need to have sound doctrines and able to handle the Word of God correctly. The essence of Truth is essential and utmost important. We need to teach and help our people to build a firm foundation. We must be able to resist and reject false and deviant teachings such as the liberal and loose teaching on human sexuality. We seek for truth and unity for the purpose of mission.[\[13\]](#) In the global scene, we, too, need to speak the Truth without fear and favour.

2.2 Transformation of Character

Simultaneously, there must be a parallel track of character transformation and development. Bishop Lim has initiated the Malaysian Indigenous Clinical Pastoral Education (MI-CPE) in 2006. Today we begin to see our firstfruit in the person of Ven. Steven Abbarow who will be accredited soon as a certified MI-CPE trainer and supervisor. I hope the rest of the team members will press on to attain the certification by next year. The present team of Supervisor-In-Training (SIT) has run three successful batches of students for MI-CPE Part 1 course. I sincerely hope that all my priests will one day go through this MI-CPE. It is not sufficient only to be good theologians; we must have good character to substantial a good ministry for the Lord. To be in the Lord's business, we are expected to be morally upright, apt to teach, good stewardship, sound doctrine, committed servants and dynamic leaders. It is beneficial to note, in Steve Farrar's book 'Finishing Strong', the five marks of an Unleader: An Unleader is an – a. UnServant; b. UnTeacheable; c. UnJust; d. UnHospitable; e. Has an UnHappy family.[\[14\]](#) Richard Foster and Kathryn Halmers together advocate that "the progressive transformation of our character increases our ability to receive grace upon grace."[\[15\]](#) The MI-CPE is a tool that can shape us to be more gracious and gradually metamorphoses us into the likeness of the One with whom we obey and surrender our lives to.[\[16\]](#)

It is prudent for us to have a system of evaluation and accountability for all of us who are in the Lord's business. This has rung loud and clear at the First Diocesan Clergy and Lay Leaders Conference in Genting Highlands last March. Much thoughts and planning have gone into looking at available sources in the market. Our hope is to get it off the ground soon.

The next stage in our plan is the setting-up of a Department of Counselling. The basic requirement to be a Counsellor trainee is to attend a course in MI-CPE. We need to distance ourselves from the pseudo-counselling practices i.e.

telling counselees what to do, imposing our own prejudices and views upon the counselees. Proper counselling practice is helping the counselees to identify his problem and to realize the solution's potential within him.

Christian Spirituality and Spiritual Direction to a Christian are like a well full with fresh water reserve and never will run dry. In this rat-race, demanding and fast-changing world, many including Christians have given up hope and "disillusioned to the point of giving up trying to do what's right so that life will work", says Larry Crabb in his foreword for David Benner's book 'Sacred Companion'. He continued to describe the dire state of today's Christian people's chase after an illusive utopia of success and wealth –

"No amount of effort, including good 'Christian' effort, makes life always go as we want. Even when it does, when things do go our way, our souls at best are half filled. Something that was missing when blessings were absent remains missing in their presence."^[17]

Many workers in the Lord's business, though sincerely believe in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, have great difficulty registering a spiritual friendship with Him. It is inevitable for us to seek or serve as spiritual companion to others on the spiritual journey. Our encounter with God is a sacred experience^[18]; it helps us to become aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit and to have spiritual discernment. This is another area of great need that we cannot ignore. Deaconess Dulcie Abraham has engaged herself in such ministry with the Maranatha Group for the past years. We can tap on this as a beginning for our Diocese. I do not intend to bring insult or assume that we are ignorant, but at the same time, I do not wish to take for granted for the assumption that the Christian Spirituality and Spiritual Direction are only for the clergy. All of us will need it as early as possible in our Christian walk.

2.3 Transformation of Skill

The third track is the enhancement of skill in Expository Preaching and the Encounter with the Holy Spirit. I have planned and invited the Langham Partnership International to work out some training for Expository Preaching and Writer's Workshop for the coming years. It is my hope, as well as many of yours, to transform the pulpit into a dynamic platform where the written word will become alive and active in people's lives. It is not our intention to create a people who are only hearers but doers as well. I wish to see that our people, both clergy and laity, can handle the Word of God rightly and delicately, like the surgery knife in the hand of the surgeon. In order to enhance the usage of the Word rightly, it is extremely crucial and inevitably necessary to assure that the usage and the administration of the Word responsibly, boldly, generously and purposefully. This can only be done neither with human clever ideology nor hard working efforts instead with the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Man's efforts can only contribute to the building of the physical world of matter. However the Holy Spirit's power can contribute to the inner, spiritual and eternal matter of a person. Preaching the Word of God rightly will bring the right understanding. Preaching the Word of God rightly by people with good character will usher the mobilization of workers with right understanding. Preaching the Word of God rightly by people with good character who have the anointing of the Holy Spirit, will initiate and activate the transformation of God-fearing workers with right understanding and right motive to the glory of God beyond our prayers and imagination.

In the Acts of the Apostles, we read that at the Day of Pentecost after the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, Peter spoke with great courage and power, and 3000 people was cut to the heart and repented and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ that day. Later, Paul's deep worry about the Corinthians, says John Stott, "was that they were 'fleshly' (NIV 'worldly'), and not 'spiritual'. (1 Corinthian 3:1)"^[19] The disarrayed Corinthians Christians have the message and the spiritual gifts but lack the character which in the New Testament is the call to holiness: "to live by the Spirit", so that we will not "gratify the desires of the sinful nature".^[20]

2.4 Transformation through Discipleship

The fourth track is Discipleship Training and Servanthood. There is no shortcut in the business of the Lord. The shortest path to the Lord's blessing is a zig-zag, like the skiing method. To Jesus, Discipleship and Servanthood can be interchangeably used. To be a disciple of Christ is to be a servant of Jesus. In the Great Commission in Matthew chapter 28, the charge to 'Go and Make Disciples' can also be read as 'Go and Make Servants', therefore I am in

agreement with Tan Siang Yang in his book 'Full Service' which states "true servanthood.....is also a substantial part of discipleship, which is a more biblical term referring to our living in Jesus and following Him all the way".[\[21\]](#)

"A disciple of Jesus must become a servant who serves. This is not incidental but a necessary and vital matter. This is a matter of essence and thus no one can be exempt. Why is that? Disciples of Jesus cannot evade servanthood, because it is the example that Jesus has shown to us. Jesus came into the world, taking on the very nature of a servant (Phil. 2:7-8). And He lived in this world as a servant. 'But I am among you as one who serves' (Luke 22:27b)..... The sacrifice of His life on the cross as the sacrificial lamb was the final confirmation of Jesus' true servanthood."[\[22\]](#)

I hope to develop a Discipleship Training for our Diocese. There is a lot of preparation since we do not have such training programme yet. First, I need to sell this idea to all of you and then send some of you for training. It may take two to three years before we can begin such Discipleship Training for our Diocese. It is hard work but it worth every sen and effort that we put into it. I do not want to see ourselves developing into many dioceses without simultaneously developing the attitude of servanthood in the making of Disciples of Christ among our people. This Discipleship Training is not only meant for the clergy rather it is for all. The book 'Called to Awaken the Laity' by John Oak, the former Senior Pastor of Sarang Presbyterian Community Church, Korea is an excellent and practical book on Discipleship.

We, the clay, must allow our God, the Potter, to shape us into the persons He has desired. True servanthood is one who obeys and allows the Master to make him into whatever shape of vessel He sees best.

3.0 THE JUBILEE

The Diocese will be celebrating its 40th Anniversary next year. Why are we celebrating? What are we grateful for? We are not here to celebrate for the sake of celebrating, rather to celebrate with a purpose of 'launching into the deep'. It is time for us to begin deep sea fishing and to haul shoals of fishes instead of just fishing in the ponds or lakes. We need to 'compete with the horses', so to speak. We need to be concentrating our efforts on our next generation. Our children and our youth are our hopes and aspirations. How are we doing church? Whom are we catering for? If we are putting the bulk of our efforts and finance (i.e. programmes, activities, training, and equipping) catering for the seniors and adults only, we will become a redundant church in 10 to 20 years time. On the contrary, if we are willing to invest on the children and youth of today, we can expect a vibrant and lively church in 10 to 20 years time.

We can learn many valuable lessons from the commercial world. Almost all the big leading corporations in the world learn from their users and consumers, many of them are young children and youth.

"Any marketing-oriented company will know that its customers form the key to its success and provide the lifeline to its business. Today, an increasing number of companies are trying to find out more about their customers through data mining, surveys, focus group interviews, and various other means. Their aim is to find ways to serve their customers better, as well as to find ways to differentiate their product/service offerings from their competitors."[\[23\]](#)

We have young children and youth. Is our methodology too out of date and irrelevant to attract them and their attention? George Barna, through his research on unchurched adults (I believe it also includes children and youth), concludes that people stay away from church not because of 'bad past experiences' rather because of 'irrelevant past experiences'.[\[24\]](#) We do not only have generation gap now. There is techno-digital gap which has driven the divide even further. While our young ones are communicating through e-mail and smses, some of our seniors are still trying to address the techno-digital phobia and getting its bearings. As the divide gets wider and wider, the adult and parental supervision is getting slimmer and slimmer. This will, and has to a certain extent, lead to many vices and addictions to pornography on the internet. It will undermine the moral and spiritual foundation of our young ones. In The Edge Financial Daily on the 14th August 2009, it was reported that in China the "Chinese parents 'shed tears' as they begged the government to protect their children from obscenity on the internet justifying curbs on access to the web in China."[\[25\]](#) We need to do something fast in order to arrest this deterioration and to replace it with good and healthy valued programmes and activities.

3.1 The Next Generation

The situation of children and youth ministry in our Diocese needs much injection of funds and ideas, and the realignment of priority. The national birth rate is much greater than the rate of increase of our children and youth groups in some of our churches. This is an alarming sign. Our constant criticism of the western churches will take a boomerang slap on our own home front. Something must be done urgently and at a faster pace. I have brought in Miss Sheerah Lee as our evangelist especially for children and youth ministry, and have introduced the concept of Kidsgames at the last two Synods. Unfortunately, there were few takers and only a handful of churches have invited Sheerah Lee. All of those who have tried and tasted Kidsgames have recorded great numbers of children and youth participation. I am surprised that our people are so slow in response. The Tamil Methodist Church have immediately responded and invited Sheerah Lee to help them when they accidentally heard of Kidsgames. There are also Teens games, Family games and Sports games within the Kidsgames umbrella. Sheerah Lee has also brought Kidsgames to Cambodia early this year.

A church without children and youth ministry is a church without a future. How do we arrest this downward trend in some of our churches? First, the PCC must set aside a reasonable budget for this ministry. Next, the church must send some children and youth advisors and volunteer workers for training. If this ministry is a priority of our churches, then the PCC members must get involved and be helpers and encouragers. If any church can afford, she should look into the possibility of employing youth or children worker. This group is not wage earners, thus, they need more help than other groups.

It is our aim and desire to place top priority on children and youth ministry in our Diocese. I strongly urge and plead with those PCCs and the Boards which do not have a coordinator or person-in-charge of children and youth ministry to do so urgently, and to set aside a reasonable budget for this. Children camps or Vacation Bible Schools and Sunday School Teachers' Training to be organized annually either regionally or diocesan wide. It is important for us all to note that we are training, moulding and laying foundations for our future bishops, archdeacons, priests and deaconesses. 'A man reaps what he sows' [\[26\]](#); likewise, a diocese or a church will reap what she sows. I am also looking at the cooperation with other churches in the training and resources. [\[27\]](#)

3.2 Thanksgiving

We give thanks for the past forty years of God's leading. Our forefathers have laid a firm foundation for us. All our former Bishops, namely, Tan Sri Roland Koh, Tan Sri J.G. Savarimuthu and Tan Sri Dr. Lim Cheng Ean, were called to be the leaders of their time in the life of our Diocese. As we thank them for their faithful service, we are reminded that one prepared the ground, another one planted the seed, yet another watered, and now we reap the harvest. This Harvest should spur us further in sharing the fruits with our community and beyond. This is our Give-Back.

The Anglican Care is a good way for us to express our gratitude and care to the less privileged. I hope and pray that more of our churches will take up the challenge to pioneer new areas of social care. Let us also contribute to the society by joining hands to organize a nationwide blood donation campaign or something of like nature, as an expression of gratitude and praise to God. We can also take a positive step to bring blessings to other homes and caring centres through our interactions and services.

We can also move beyond our borders and bring mission blessings to our neighbouring nations, especially Bangladesh and Myanmar, our companion dioceses, and also the nations in our Province. We were once the recipient of mission. As an expression of thanksgiving, now we can be the sender of mission teams. In reality, we will receive more than we give while sending mission teams to other nations. Our people will learn to give and bless others. This experience cannot be bought by money. It is leadership training and a humility initiator programme.

The REACH programme has been activated at a slow pace since its inception in 2007. [\[28\]](#) The first project was the response to the Nargis Cyclone Relief in Myanmar in May 2008. We have raised nearly RM100,000 and all of it has been distributed through the Anglican Province of Myanmar. The fund raised was used to build houses in the Delta

region, food & basic living necessity relief and medical assistance, etc. [\[29\]](#) The second project was the Sichuan Earthquake Relief in China in May 2008. About RM50,000 was raised where RM10,000 was sent through CCM to the Amity Foundation. The remainder will be channeled through the Council of Churches in China. The third project was the Gaza Palestinian Humanitarian Relief early this year. RM12,000 was raised and was channeled through the Council of Churches in the Middle East. The fourth project was the Zimbabwe Humanitarian Relief in response to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Appeal. About RM8,000 was raised. We need to respond to the Taiwan Marakot Typhoon Relief as many lives and properties are lost. International helps are needed to rebuild the devastated region. Many people are stranded and cut off from the main roads. I am appealing to all to donate generously to this cause.

The next cause of action is to organize Training for Relief workers. We wish to get involve at ground zero when need arises. Training is necessary so that we are ready and equipped for action. We can invite our neighbouring diocese to help us because they have embarked in such relief ministry for some years. We thank God that we can offer assistance to the people in need.

3.3 The Future of our Boards and Committees

We give thanks to God for our Diocesan Boards and Committees. We have seen our Boards and Committees growing steadily each year. We now need to look beyond to the next 10 years. If we are moving in the same direction of expecting the formation of a province of West Malaysia then we must be working towards creating and strengthening the regional boards and committees. It will be inappropriate to create a new diocese without the boards and committees in place. So far all our boards, including the Chinese, Tamil and BM, do not have regional boards or activities. The same goes to all the committees except the Diocesan Women Committee, which has regional committees. The Diocesan Youth Council has tried to organise regional council in the past but still unsuccessful. More efforts and prayers are needed.

One of the important tasks all the boards and committees have to undertake is the idea of a Discipleship Training School. Unless concerted efforts are put into the momentum of training, we are not going to see many workers coming forth. Disciples are made and not born or dropped from heaven. Training should be an on-going process and programme. I wish to see the boards training and raising their own workers. They should act as the second level of screening before the candidates are sent to the Diocesan Ordination and Evangelistic Workers Committee for interviews, while the parish church is the first level of screening. [\[30\]](#)

The boards and committees should be looking at the multi-level training for the children, youth, ladies, men, golden circle, lay readers and lay pastors. There are many types of trainings but the most basic and essential one is Discipleship Training. It is "a process that enables a person to dedicate himself as a witness of the gospel, a teacher of the truth, and a loving healer [and] makes a person do his or her best as one called to glorify God's name, and to fulfill God's will, regardless of one's occupation and surrounding circumstances." [\[31\]](#)

4.0 A NEW COMMUNITY

Can we see ourselves becoming a new community of faith, as least by definition? John Maxwell says, "Vision may begin with one person, but it is accomplished only through the efforts of many people..... The people who didn't accept the vision neither championed it nor transferred it to their followers. As a result, the people they led often didn't contribute to the overall success of the organization." [\[32\]](#) We must walk and work together, just the song goes:

*We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord;
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord;
And we know that all unity may one day be restored;
And they know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
And they know we are Christians by our love.*

*We will walk with each other; we will walk side by side.
We will work with each other; we will work side by side.*

The Synod needs to see the formation of the province of West Malaysia in our dreams and visions. The church leaders and PCCs need to see it too, and work towards it. The boards and committees also need to capture the vision and are expected to prepare the ground for it. Do we want to ‘compete with the horses’?

In the process of the formation of the province of West Malaysia, we need more members thus more churches, which mean we need to raise more workers of good character and sound learning. We need Disciples of Christ. This does advocate a Discipleship Training School in every region. This is our priority for the next decade – the training for the younger generation. John Maxwell states that “True success comes only when every generation continues to develop the next generation.”^[33]

Appendix A

| | ARCHDEACONRY | PARISHES | MDs | OUTREACH | MEMBERS |
|---|---------------------|-----------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 | UPPER NORTH | 6 | 5 | 4 | 1677 |
| 2 | LOWER NORTH | 15 | 10 | 23 | 2597* |
| 3 | UPPER CENTRAL | 14 | 7 | 15 | 6111 |
| 4 | LOWER CENTRAL | 3 | 0 | 3 | 710* |
| 5 | SOUTHERN | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1577 |
| 6 | EASTERN | 3 | 1 | 2 | 654 |
| | TOTAL | 44 | 27 | 52 | 13326# |

Note:

(*) – Electoral roll members;

(#) – the Orang Asli and the Chinese Villagers from AVM is not included; we can add another 2000.

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20. **THE EDGE FINANCIAL DAILY**, Issue 552/2009, Friday August 14, 2009.
21. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop_of_Kuching

[4] The Constitution of the Church of the Province of South East Asia: Article XV (d) (i) and (ii).

[5] We have done once in 1997 when we received the approval of the amendment of replacing the word ‘Canterbury’ to ‘South East Asia’ for the matter of Metropolitan. See Laws of Malaysia Incorporation Act A983. We can apply for the change of the word ‘Diocese of West Malaysia’ to ‘province of West Malaysia’.

[6] Ian Bunting, ed., *Celebrating the Anglican Way*, Hodder & Stoughton, Great Britain, 1996, p. 238.

[7] Gary McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2002, chapter 14 – Linking Generations, p. 210ff.

[8] This was spoken at length at last year’s Synod. Also see John Oak, *Called to Awaken the Laity*, Christian Focus Publications, Ross-shire, 2006, chapter 17 – The Nature of the Church will change. And Peter Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace*, Regal Books, Ventura, California, 2006, chapter 6 – Two Cultures, Two Rule Books, p. 87ff.

[9] When I first introduced the concept of Lay Pastors for our Diocese, I was innocently introducing an idea of shared leadership. Little did I realize that it has, to some, become a tension within their churches because of the 'apparent' struggle between the Lay Pastor and the Lay Reader as to whichever is higher in position. I wish to stick to my original decision that there is no higher or lower in position for the Lay Pastor and the Lay Reader since both have different roles to play. However, for the sake of procession order, the Lay Reader being an older ministry in the church should process behind the Lay Pastor.

[10] The 4-year series of Lay Pastors' School consists of >> Part 1 – The Pastor's Personal Life; Part 2 – The Pastor's Leadership in the Church; Part 3 – The Family Life of a Pastor; Part 4 – The Mission and Ministry of a Pastor.

[11] Matthew 9:37 and Luke 10:2 "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field."

[12] See Bishop Moses Tay, *Born for Blessings*, Genesis Books, Singapore, 2009. And Betty Young, *Before I Fall Asleep*, Selangor, Malaysia, 2008.

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[15] Richard Foster with Kathryn Helmers, *Life With God*, Harper One, NY, 2008, p. 191.

[16] The story of Saul in the book of 1 Samuel is a study of a leadership failure due to his disobedience to God's Word.

[17] David Benner, *Sacred Companions*, IVP, Downers Grove, 2002, Foreword.

[18] See Paul Young, *The Shack*, Hodder & Stroughton, London, 2007. It is a fiction book for people who felt that religion is irrelevant and helps to address the question, "Where is God in a world so filled with unspeakable pain?"

[19] John Stott, (revised by Stephen Motyer), *Men With A Message*, Evangelical Literature Trust, Suffolk, 1996, p. 98.

[20] Galatians 5:16

[21] Siang Yang Tan, *Full Service*, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2006, p. 44.

[22] John H. Oak, *Called To Awaken The Laity*, Christian Focus Publications, Ross-shire, Scotland, 2006, p. 144. Pastor John Oak is the former senior pastor Sarang Community Church in Seoul, Korea. He pastored one of the largest Presbyterian Churches in the world. He began his ministry in Sarang Community Church in 1978 with 9 people and today its membership exceeds 60,000. His key to success is Discipleship Training. I have the privilege to be invited to participate and learn from the 82nd 'Called to Awaken the Laity (CAL)' seminar in March 2009.

[23] Chow-Hou Wee, *Sun Zi Bingfa*, Pearson Education South Asia Pte Ltd., Singapore, 2005, p. 164.

[24] Peter Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace*, Regal Books, Ventura, California, 2006, p. 139.

[\[25\]](#) THE EDGE FANCIAL DAILY, Issue 552/2009, Friday August 14, 2009, p. 14 'Policy & Government'.

[\[26\]](#) Galatians 6:7

[\[27\]](#) Deaconess Ruth Ong and Mr. Peter Lim Cheong Thye of Pristine World have produced some excellent children books. They are good materials for Sunday Schools as well as for home use.

[\[28\]](#) The acronym R.E.A.C.H. is Relief, Emergency And Crisis Help.

[\[29\]](#) I have visited Myanmar in May 2009 and have seen the poverty and devastation of the effect of Nargis Cyclone. More than 50 houses have been built. They have also had a constant medical team visiting the Delta region monthly. They have also bought 2 boats as their transport for the goods and people from Yangon and the Delta. The rebuilding work has not completed yet. They are progressing according to the funds they received. Many sponsors have stopped donating to this cause but the work is still unfinished.

[\[30\]](#) See Stuart Buchanan, Called by God, SPCK, London, 2008. A book to assist in the area of selection and screening of people for vocation.

[\[31\]](#) John Oak, op. cit., p. 171.

[\[32\]](#) John Maxwell, The 360 Degree Leader, Nelson Business, Nashville, Tennessee, 2005, p. 70-71.

[\[33\]](#) John Maxwell, Developing the Leaders Around You, Nelson Business, Nashville, Tennessee, 1995, p. 188.

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