

## **SPEECH By Sr Rose Wong, Superior General SSFS at the COMBINED SSFS JUBILEE CELEBRATION**

*'I give thanks to you, with all my heart; I will tell of your wonderful deeds' (Ps 9:1).*

This is the theme for this combined Jubilee celebration.

Good evening Your Grace Archbishop Simon, Archbishop Emeriti John and Peter, Rev Fathers, family members, relatives and friends of the Jubilarians, my Council members, organizing committee members, my dearest Religious Sisters and Brothers, and my most wonderful 9 Jubilarians, plus myself, so in total there are 10 of us: Platinum Jubilarian – Sr Bridget Then; Diamond Jubilarians – Srs Felicia Yong, Beatrice Ng, Mildred Chin and Mathilda Abui; Golden Jubilarians – Srs Theodora Lai and Jennifer Nyidom; and Silver Jubilarians – Srs Irene Chengann, Michaelina Martin and myself. Sorry to say that Srs Theodora and Michaelina can only join us through the live streaming. I am very happy to see you all. Thank you for taking your time to pray for and with us, sharing our joys together though most of you are far away from us physically. Your Grace Simon, thank you for presiding over this Mass for us. Archbishop Emeritus John Ha, Fathers especially Fr Patrick and Fr Martin, Sisters and Brothers, your presence and prayer are greatly appreciated. To the working committee under the guidance of Sr Flora and Sr Eunicia, my sincere thanks for all you have done for us, and the Virtual Singing dedicated to the Jubilarians led by Sr Delicia and her Team. Congratulations my dear Sisters.

Due to Covid-19 pandemic we have been very flexible in adjusting our plans and finally making it materialize. We had cancelled our last year's Jubilee celebration, and brought it forward to this year. This is the first time we celebrate this joyous occasion with such a small number of people physically present in our retired Sisters' Chapel at Home of Santa Clara. I am most thankful to our Archbishop Simon for allowing us to extend our celebration via live streaming, so that many people have the chance to share our joy and participate in the Eucharistic Celebration from a distance. We also take the opportunity to give witness to our consecrated life. Thanks to Ivy, Catherine and Amelia for taking charge of the live streaming.

My dear Jubilarians, on behalf of my Council members and all my fellow Sisters, I congratulate and thank you for giving yourself fully to this family of SSFS and God's people for His mission. Your long years of commitment have been greatly appreciated. Allow me to share an example of our oldest Sister, Platinum Jubilarian Sr Bridget Then who is 93. She still faithfully says her daily prayers, attends daily Mass and continues to give her daily service to the Sisters in her community. It is proven that age is just a number. It is the heart of love towards God and others that makes the difference. Sr Bridget, thank you for having inspired us by how we should live our lives, by connecting with God and care for others, until the Lord calls us back to His heavenly kingdom.

Celebrating Jubilee is not celebrating an accomplishment. It is not what we have done for the past 25, 50, 60 or 70 years. It is an act of gratitude to celebrate and pray together as one big family for this Sacred Vocation that calls us to be more committed to imitate Christ and our Seraphic Father St Francis of Assisi in our love of God, humanity and God's creation. We know that the more we appreciate and love Him, the more we will imitate Him, by being more faithful to our commitment at all costs, able to relate with one another without being bound by conditions. We see God's presence in every situation and in His creation, and also we will have the desire to reach out to others in various pastoral care.

God has a purpose for all of us, and here we see some of us have tried to cooperate with Him, and put all our trust in Him, even at times when we see how limited we are. Do not divert our focus by losing hope in seeing the limitations of others, but to be like Christ to have untiring hope in every

individual. If Christ could leave the ninety-nine sheep and looked for the lost one, this signifies that we should never single out anyone but to give importance to everyone.

My dear Jubilarians, we are Franciscans, let us continue to 'SPEAK' to the world through our way of life that is connected with and to God, so that people can see the greatness of His Truth, what He can do to our lives, and they will search for the right things that can make them feel more contentment within, more peaceful and happier to live. Our community life that embraced the examples and teachings of Christ should prove to every family that it is possible to build the Domestic Church as God wishes. God has given us the best way to live, and He has offered to us freely. It depends on how much we can accept His free gift.

Our path is not only meaningful and enjoyable, but challenging. At times it is quite difficult to carry the cross as a gift of love towards God and humanity. But, it is worthwhile to encounter hardships, because that is the only way we can unite our sufferings with Christ. We need divine eyes to see the glory behind the cross. Apart from that, God will gradually purify our inner-self and make us free inwardly. These experiences will bring everlasting peace, and happiness into our lives, which no worldly things and worldly pleasure can offer us. Even Covid-19 will not be able to take away this peace, and no fear will enter us if our hearts have Him. The Lord has granted us countless blessings along our journey. His goodness and fulfilling experiences that we have encountered along the journey, give us the grace and strength to commit our lives to Him until today, and even beyond. These are the wonderful deeds that the Lord has done in our lives, and I am most happy to share with you all tonight.

On behalf of all my fellow religious Sisters, I would like to wish you all a Joyous and Blessed Christmas in advance. May we welcome the newborn Saviour to be born in our hearts and let every part of our being be united with Him.

Following this, we will show you the video clip on our 10 Jubilarians, and in conclusion I also take the opportunity to share with you about how we have prepared our new candidates in their initial formation when I was the appointed formator. Just sit back, relax and watch. Thank you. Praise the Lord.

**Sr Rose Wong, Superior General SSFS**

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