



**Disciples**  
*Making Disciples*



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## Being Prophets of God

Solemnity of the Nativity of St John the Baptist

24 June 2018

Is 49:1-6

Ac 13:22-26

Lk 1:57-66,80

There are three birthdays which the Church celebrates in her liturgy. Foremost is the birth of Jesus on December 25 – the day when we see God's face in the infant Jesus and acknowledge with gratitude the coming of God's promised Saviour. The other two are that of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary on September 8 and the Nativity of St John the Baptist on June 24.

The birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist are celebrated because they are "closely connected with the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God" (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Angelus, 24 June 2012).

This "close connection" relates to the gift of grace or the Holy Spirit that came with the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity.

The Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist were both born without original sin – but their preservation from original sin at birth did not happen in the same way. While the Blessed Virgin Mary was preserved from original sin "in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God...in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the

Savior of the human race" (*Ineffabilis Deus*, Pius IX), St John the Baptist was conceived with original sin but three months before his birth, at the Blessed Virgin Mary's visitation to his aged mother Elizabeth, John "leaped" in Elizabeth's womb (Lk 1:41). It has traditionally been accepted that this "leap" signifies the moment when both John and his mother came to be "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Lk 1:41). We are all cleansed of original sin and "filled with the Holy Spirit" only at our baptism but for the Blessed Virgin Mary and St John the Baptist, this gift of the fullness of the Spirit took place before they were born.

In today's liturgy, to prophesy or speak of the message of salvation offered by God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ, is highlighted as the reason for the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Is 49:6; Ac 13:26). Today, we commonly refer to this needed action as evangelisation. All of us who are baptised are given the privilege of God's inner life and this must become a lived encounter. Like all those who were at John's circumcision and were filled with awe not only at Zechariah's miraculous recovery of speech but also the grace or spirit that John was filled with (John means "graced by God"), we too, at every Holy Mass, must be filled with awe that God desires so much to save us and draw us close to Him that He unceasingly offers us the Eucharist – the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of His Only-Begotten Son.

This is a great gift which we must continuously contemplate, treasure in our hearts and speak to others

*"...if we Christians call [Jesus] the one universal Mediator of salvation... this does not mean that we despise other religions...it means that we are gripped by him who has lavished gifts upon us, so that we, in turn, can offer gifts to others."*  
– Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

about (cf Lk 1:65-66). There is also an urgency to being prophets of this message of salvation as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI has so often reminded us, "Today as in the past, it is not enough to be more or less like everyone else and to think like everyone else. Our lives have a deeper purpose. We need God, the God who has shown us His face and opened His heart to us: Jesus Christ...only he, from deep within God himself, could reveal God to us— reveal to us who we are, from where we come and where we are going... So if we Christians call Him the one universal Mediator of salvation, valid for everyone and, ultimately, needed by everyone, this does not mean that we despise other religions, nor are we arrogantly absolutising our own ideas; on the contrary, it means that we are gripped by Him who has touched our hearts and lavished gifts upon us, so that we, in turn, can offer gifts to others (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Homily, Sep 8, 2007).

On this Solemnity of the Nativity of St John the Baptist, let us strive a little more to be God's prophets and bring to others the gift of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (Jn 1:29).

## Announcements

For announcements in the bulletin, send your requests to [mmm@sfxchurch.sg](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg) by the MONDAY before the weekend, 2359hrs

### CANTEEN

'Angels of Manna' will be running the canteen this weekend. Go support them and enjoy a time of fellowship over food!

### LANDINGS: RETURNED!

A testimony event by **LANDINGS** on **6 Jul (Fri), 7.30pm** at **CANA The Catholic Centre at Waterloo Street**. For every account of someone who has left the Catholic Church, there is an inspiring personal tale of another's return. Come check out these testimonies of faith. Or better yet, bring a friend or loved one who might benefit from these homecoming stories. We invite anyone interested either as a returning Catholic or as a welcoming participant. Please register for this event at [returning@landing.org.sg](mailto:returning@landing.org.sg) or Facebook: Landings - Singapore.

### CHARISMATIC

The next charismatic session is Eucharistic Celebration by Fr Benedict Chng on **Monday 25 Jun** at **8pm** in the Parish Hall. All are welcome.

### CARD FOR FR BRIAN/JUDE, PRAYERS FOR FR BEN/DON

Write a note to the 'outgoing' priests on the cards and a short prayer for the 'incoming' priests on the leaves and pin it to the board. The board/cards will be there till **24 Jun, 7pm**.



## LIFE IN THE SPIRIT SEMINAR 2018 - ENCOUNTER, EMPOWERED, EVANGELISE

### TOPICS

9 Jul	"Encounter, Empowered and Evangelise"	Roderick Lim
16 Jul	"God The Father Loves You personally."	Fr Benedict Chng
23 Jul	"Jesus Saves You And Sets You Free."	Michelle Voo
30 Jul	"Jesus Is The Lord Of Your Life."	Edmund Ang
6 Aug	"Come Back to Me. (Confession)"	Fr Thomas Lim
13 Aug	"Jesus Sends You His Holy Spirit"	Fr Thomas Lim
20 Aug	"Come Holy Spirit Fill Us With Your Gifts"	Fr Thomas Lim
27 Aug	"You Will Receive The Holy Spirit.(Baptism)"	Fr Thomas Lim
3 Sep	"Commissioning Mass (Discipleship)"	Fr Benedict Chng

**Phone enquiry:** Catherine Chew 9066 3514, or Jean Teo 9002 6616

**Email enquiry:** [sfxlifeinthspirit@gmail.com](mailto:sfxlifeinthspirit@gmail.com)

**To Register:** [bit.ly/sfxliss](http://bit.ly/sfxliss)

**About LISS:** [bit.ly/aboutsfxliss2018](http://bit.ly/aboutsfxliss2018)

### SFX RETREAT: THE ROAD TO EMMAUS (RTE)

The annual retreat is back! Renew your spiritual lives and have a personal encounter with Jesus. Note that this is a non-stay in retreat meant for SFX Parishioners.

#### Dates:

**4 Oct** Thu: 8pm - 10pm

**5 Oct** Fri: 8pm - 10pm

**6 Oct** Sat: 9am - 10pm

**7 Oct** Sun: 9am - 6.30pm (mass included)

**13 Oct** Sat: 9am - 1.00pm

#### Register online:

[tinyurl.com/rte6register](http://tinyurl.com/rte6register)

### RTE6 Service Team Recruitment

Calling those who have attended previous RTEs and/or PRE retreats! If you are able to help out at RTE6 as a Service Team member, please register using this link: [tinyurl.com/rteservice](http://tinyurl.com/rteservice)

## Fathers' Day with Our Four beloved Priests



Praying over our four priests, that they continue to serve God's people with a shepherd's heart, generosity, love for the sacraments, docility to the Holy Spirit, obedience and humility.

More pictures on page 4 >>

# WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

## Preparing for Mass

The mass is the source and summit of our Christian life. Weekly, we are invited by God to partake in a special banquet. Like a party we may attend, adequate preparation is required before we attend Mass.

### ATTIRE

Although the Catholic Church has no formal dress code for proper attire when attending mass, there is an expectation that we are properly dressed out of respect, honour and reverence for the Real Presence of Our Lord. Just like how even golfers adhere to a certain dress code at golf courses, appropriate dressing is essential as part of preparing ourselves for Mass.

When dressing for Mass, we need to firstly remember our purpose. This purpose is to come in community with our fellow Catholics to worship our Lord. Moreover, as we gather in unity and community for worship, our dressing should not be a distraction to our fellow parishioners.

*"There is an expectation that we are properly dressed out of respect, honour and reverence for the Real Presence of Our Lord"*

On attire, the Catechism of the Catholic Church 1387 mentions that "Bodily demeanour (gestures, clothing) ought to convey the respect, solemnity, and joy of this moment when Christ becomes our guest".

Generally, we should be guided by a combination of virtue, common sense and piety when deciding what to wear to Mass.

Some guidelines on what **not** to wear is as follows:

- ✗ Hats, caps
- ✗ Provocative or skimpy clothing, spaghetti tops
- ✗ Shorts
- ✗ Flip flops, sandals



### COMING EARLY

Arriving early before the commencement of Mass allows us to prepare our hearts to welcome Christ. By providing for sufficient time to arrive before mass, there is an opportunity to quieten ourselves, freeing our minds from the distractions and stresses of the world and enter in private prayer in the Lord's house.

Being present for the introductory rites are critical as the words and gestures that open the celebration help us come together as one and prepare us to celebrate the Eucharist worthily.

### EUCCHARISTIC FASTING

Canon 919 of the Code of Canon Law states that "a person who is to receive the Most Holy Eucharist is to abstain for at least one hour before holy communion from any food and drink except for only water and medicine." The sick and elderly, as well as those who care for them, may receive Holy Communion even if they have eaten something within the preceding hour.

*"Fasting assists us in preparing to receive Holy Communion wholly – body and soul"*

With the Eucharist the highlight and pinnacle of the Mass, we are charged with preparing ourselves- in body, mind and hearts. Fasting assists us in preparing to receive Holy Communion wholly – body and soul. Fasting creates a physical hunger and thirst for the Lord which strengthens our spiritual focus on the Lord, so that we may humbly encounter the divine Saviour who offers Himself to us. We are also reminded in Matthew 4:4 that "one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God".



### REFLECTING ON THE READINGS & GOSPEL

To properly prepare for Mass, we may look to reading the Readings and Gospel for the mass beforehand and to spend some time in reflection. This can be done in the comfort of your home or even as you come early for Mass on the Sunday itself.

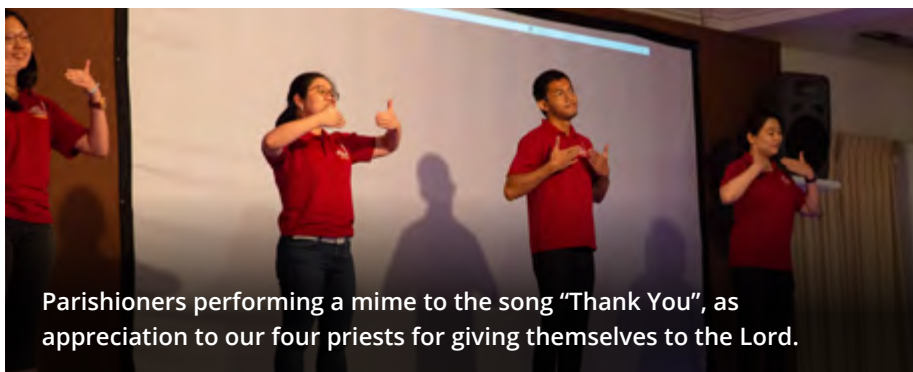
Reading and reflecting on the Readings and Gospel beforehand, allows the Word of God to take root in our hearts. As we then participate in the Liturgy, not only would it allow us to follow it more easily but the Word sowed into our hearts may bear new fruits and reveal to us new insights.



"Who knows Father best?" Our priests guess each other's favourite bible verses, food and more!



Strong brotherhood. Fr Brian affirming Fr Jude with a heartfelt speech



Parishioners performing a mime to the song "Thank You", as appreciation to our four priests for giving themselves to the Lord.

## Testimonies from our L8 retreat



Participants and service team of the retreat held from 31 May - 3 Jun

I was very excited to participate in the camp as I have been anticipating it since last year. Initially, I was only excited about the games and thought that the Eucharistic Adoration was going to be a waste of time since it just meant more praying. However, after hearing various sharings from different people about God changing their lives, I started to reflect more about my life and realised the many blessings God has given me, often things that I've taken for granted. This camp has allowed me to grow much closer to God and know that I am child of God.

- Sarah Chua

My camp experience was amazing and an eye opener. Throughout the games and sessions, I learned more about God's love for me and it also gave me the opportunity to get closer to Him. One thing that will always be special would be the many praise and worship sessions we've had. Seeing my facilitators raising their hands and praising God through songs really inspired me to do the same as well.

- Evangeline Lim

### Mass Timings

#### WEEKEND MASSES

**Sat Sunset:**  
5.30pm (Novena at 4.45pm)  
**Sun:** 7am, 9am, 11am & 5.30pm  
*Confession 15 mins before Sunday Mass*

#### WEEKDAY MASSES

**Mon - Fri:**  
6.30am & 6.30pm  
**Sat:** 6.30am

#### MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

8.30am *only*

#### HOLY HOUR

8.30pm, every first Thurs of the month

### Opening Hours

#### PARISH OFFICE

**Mon - Fri:**  
9am - 9pm  
**Sat:** 9am - 7pm  
**Sun:** 8am - 1pm

#### ADORATION ROOM

**Daily:** 5.30am - 11pm

#### LIBRARY

**Sun:** 8.30am - 12.30pm

#### COLUMBARIUM

**Daily:** 7am - 9pm

#### CANTEEN

**Sun:** 7am - 12pm

### ANOINTING OF THE SICK



The sacrament can be administered to any Catholic awaiting serious surgery, suffers from serious illness or is weakened by old age. Anointing may be before getting admitted for the anticipated medical procedure. Contact the Parish Office to request for a priest. In emergencies, priests of the church nearest to the hospital can be contacted.

### INFANT BAPTISM



Baptism of Infants is held every 2nd Sunday of the odd month at 4pm in the main church. Preparation session for both parents and godparents is held the Sunday before at 3.30pm in the SFX room. For more information please contact [sfxbaptism@gmail.com](mailto:sfxbaptism@gmail.com).

### FUNERAL



Please check with the Parish Office for priest availability and Mass timing before confirming the timing at the crematorium. For prayers at the wake, please contact St.Pio prayer group via the Parish Office.

### MARRIAGE



Contact the Parish Office 12 months before your intended date to book the church premises and ensure that your presiding priest is able to make that date.

### MASS OFFERING



Mass offering envelopes are available outside the Parish Office. Submit your envelopes at least two weeks in advance of your intended date. Please write the names clearly, and in block letters.

### VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

If you're interested in content curation and design layout, contact [mmm@sfxchurch.sg](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg)