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Disciples
Making Disciples

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Fed by His Body, Nourished by His Word

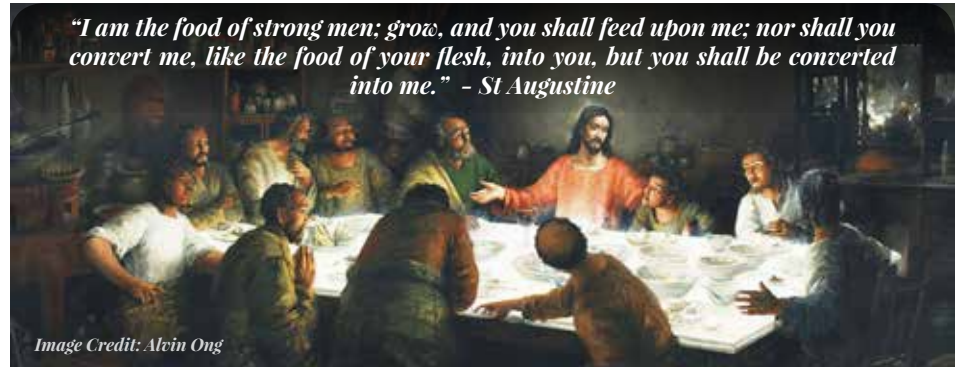
21st Sunday in Ordinary Time
26 August 2018

Jos 24:1-2, 15-18
Eph 5:21-32
Jn 6:60-69

This Sunday's gospel picks up immediately after last Sunday's. Unable to accept Christ's proclamation that his "flesh is real food" and his "blood is real drink" (Jn 6:55), many of Christ's disciples abandon him, preferring to cling to their own beliefs than embrace the Word of God. At times we too struggle to accept the teachings of Christ, be it on the Eucharist, Forgiveness, Suffering or the Sanctity of Life.

When faced with difficulties in understanding or following the divine realities of God, like the so-called "disciples" in today's gospel, we reject his word; choosing only to believe what conforms to our own worldview. Seduced by the relativistic and secular trends of modern society, we may even attempt to justify ourselves by claiming that the teachings of Holy Mother Church are just "man-made rules", perhaps even living double lives as a Catholic on Sundays and a person of the world for the rest of the week (Pope Francis, Morning Meditation, 17 November 2015).

When we nitpick only the elements of faith we want and attempt to bespoke a religion that is convenient to follow, when we claim to love God



yet challenge his teachings through our deeds and beliefs, we fall prey to "buffet discipleship". This form of discipleship withholds complete faith in God's Word; demanding love without obedience, reward without labour, and mercy without sacrifice.

Buffet discipleship cannot be counted as true discipleship because it seeks to place ourselves -not God- at the centre of our faith, constituting more of a marriage of convenience than a bond of love. Because convenient unions are neither strong nor lasting, such discipleship will soon see us assuaged by other seemingly more attractive unions which sell us comfortable lies instead of challenging us to face uncomfortable truths.

God who exists independently of our love does not need to sell us anything for he does not require our love nor discipleship to exist, instead choosing to love us superfluous creatures into existence in order to perfect us. Reflecting on this, C.S. Lewis likens God to "a 'host' who deliberately creates his own parasites...that we may exploit and 'take advantage of' him". God is the "diagram of Love himself, the inventor of all loves" (The Four Loves). It is for this reason that God gave his only Son for us; that we come to perfection and obtain eternal life (cf Jn 3:16).

Because man does not live on bread alone, but by the words that proceeds from the mouth of God (Mt 4:4), Christ, the Word Made Flesh, as the incarnation of God's word and flesh is both the sacrifice of our redemption and nourishment for our souls. True and perfect discipleship thus requires us to receive Christ's body in the Eucharist as well as live out his commands (*Evangelii Gaudium* 121, 180-183). Beyond mere obedience, this requires love which is neither conditional nor convenient (Eph 5:21-32).

Cultivating this love will therefore make us better disciples and help us to accept even the most "intolerable" of Christ's teachings. For a start, let us resolve, like the Israelites at Shechem (Jos 24:1-1,15-18), to definitively choose to serve and be disciples of God - removing ourselves from the centre of our lives and placing him at the very heart of our lives.

Even as we strive to yield ourselves over to God, we can rejoice that through the Eucharist, Jesus himself is helping us to be conformed to him as he revealed to St Augustine, "I am the food of strong men; grow, and you shall feed upon me; nor shall you convert me, like the food of your flesh, into you, but you shall be converted into me" (Confessions).

Announcements

For announcements in the bulletin, send your requests to mmm@sfxchurch.sg by the MONDAY before the weekend, 2359hrs

CANTEEN

SiGN (Sowers in God's Name) is running the canteen this weekend. Look forward to the usual favourites plus curry chee cheong fun, Melaka homemade food and other goodies. Beyond food, the SiGNers are selling handmade pouches and tote bags to raise funds for our church renovations. These exquisite items are lovingly made by a few creative parishioners who have donated their time and skills to help raise funds. There will also be a Bible bag painting activity held in **St Catherine room** (2nd floor, Parish Centre) from **8am to 1pm**. Come eat, buy and paint!

CATECHISM NOTICE

There will be no catechism sessions on **Sun 2 Sep** due to the school holidays. Sessions will resume on **Sun 9 Sep**.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION FOR OUR L3S

A total of 55 boys and girls from our parish will be receiving the sacrament of First Holy Communion during the 5.30pm mass on **Sun 2 Sep**. Please pray for the children's well-being and for their hearts to be ready to receive our Lord.

CHARISMATIC LISS

The next session is held on **Mon 27 Aug at 8pm**, 2nd Level, Parish Hall. The session begins with praise and worship followed by a talk on 'You will receive the Holy Spirit' and Baptism of the Holy Spirit for LISS participants by Fr Thomas Lim.

PIETA SINGAPORE

PIETA is a support group for bereaved parents seeking God's comfort, wisdom and hope through prayer and reflection on the WORD OF GOD. Our next monthly session (every 4th Tuesday of the month) is on **Tue 28 Aug, 7.30pm** at Agape Village, Toa Payoh Lorong 8.

Contact us via email: pieta.singapore@gmail.com or facebook: <https://facebook.com/PietaSingapore>

Featured on FORMED in September

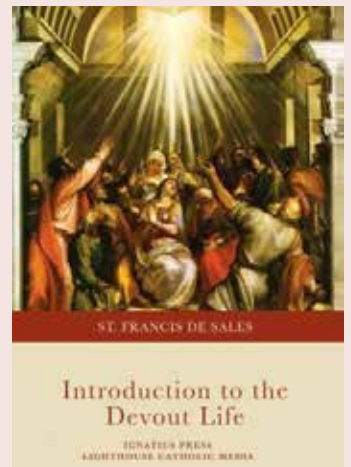


Theme for Sept: Prayer

Prayer is the foundation of a lived relationship with God. St. Paul tells us that our prayer must be characterised by "thanksgiving" (Colossians 4:2). While it may be tempting to focus on the ways in which we can love God through our works, in prayer we are invited to contemplate that "we love, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19), and to be filled with thanksgiving for God's showering of mercy and affection on us. Check out these resources on prayer on **FORMED** today!

READ: The Introduction to the Devout Life

Written over 400 years ago, the Introduction to the Devout Life is still one of the most popular books for those pursuing holiness. St. Francis de Sales explains how to turn that desire for sanctity into resolutions that yield grace-filled results. Whether you are just beginning your spiritual journey or are more advanced in the spiritual life, you'll be able to apply this timeless wisdom immediately.



WATCH: Praying the Rosary Like Never Before

Dr Edward Sri breathes new life into our understanding of the Rosary prayer in this presentation from the Napa Institute. Following John Paul II's letter "On the Most Holy Rosary," in which the saint gave us the Luminous Mysteries, Dr Sri stresses the importance of devoting one's self to the Rosary today, for the transformation of individual lives and our society.



FOR CHILDREN: Brother Francis: Let's Pray!

This 20-min video teaches the little ones how to establish a personal relationship with God through prayer. Let the ever-joyful Brother Francis character teach the children how and what to pray.

Lay Apostolate Sunday

This weekend we celebrate Lay Apostolate Sunday. On this day, we, the laity, are reminded that as part of the Body of Christ, we are called to an important mission.



What is Lay Apostolate and what is our mission?

The decree on the apostolate of laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, by the Second Vatican Council, expresses that *"the Church was founded for the purpose of spreading the kingdom of Christ throughout the earth for the glory of God the Father, to enable all men to share in his saving redemption, and that through them the whole world might enter into a relationship with Christ. All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this goal is called the apostolate, which the Church carries on in various ways through all her members"*.

In summary, apostolate is the activity that members of the Body of Christ carries out to spread the kingdom of God. We, the lay people, by virtue that we are living in the midst of the world and are embroiled in its developments, are thus called by God to make our faith present and fruitful in the world – that is, to make Christ's real presence felt by others as we live our ordinary, everyday lives.



How is Lay Apostolate and Lay Ministry different?

Lay apostolate can be differentiated from lay ministry through its purpose. Lay ministry's purpose is to serve a particular need of the parish. Lay ministries are indeed essential for the smooth running of the church and growing the faith of its members. While lay ministry is performed within the church setting, lay apostolate work is done in the secular world. The fundamental call as a lay Christian disciple, through our baptism, is to respond to the needs of the world – the greatest being the need for Christ.



How can we live out our vocation in our daily lives?

As ambassadors of Christ, we are called to be salt and light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16). As salt of the earth, we should strive to add positive flavour to the people around us, building them up with words of encouragement and actions of love. In a world that does not know Christ, we, the lay people, become the light to shine people to Jesus. We are challenged to exercise our faith in words and deeds, so that through our lives, we reveal God's love to our fellow men.



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If you forgot your password

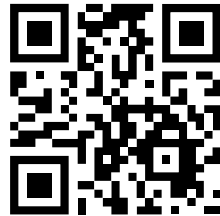
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iPhone users:

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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



Let's cultivate the apostolic spirit in our children
- by teaching them to pray for others!

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in _____,
 Hallowed be Thy _____,
 Thy _____
 come, Thy Will be done,
 on _____
 as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily _____;
 and forgive us our debts,
 as we _____
 our debtors.

And lead us not into _____,
 but deliver us from _____: For Thine is
 the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
 forever. **Amen.**

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 infbaptism@sfxchurch.sg.

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. Church unavailable from 1 Nov 2018 due to renovations.

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