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**Disciples  
Making Disciples**

## *Dominus veniet!* Christ, The Reason for this Season

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent  
2 Dec 2018

Jer 33:14-16  
1 Th 3:12-4:2  
Lk 21:25-28, 34-36

Although the beginning of Advent signifies the start of a new liturgical year, the readings this Sunday do not eschew the apocalyptic themes - often associated with the end of the liturgical year - nor bespeak of celebration - often associated with new beginnings. Even the Gloria, Christendom's hymn of joy and praise to God has been omitted; the liturgy noticeably muted and sombre this season (GIRM 53,305,313). In its sombreness, the new liturgical year might not feel like a new beginning at all. Why does the church seemingly deprive us of a celebration - why does the liturgy project such sombreness?

In her wisdom, Mother Church dons this sobriety to remind us that we (still) lack a reason to celebrate. We might have begun a new liturgical year, but Christ - the very source of our joy - is still absent; Christmas has not yet come!! It is only appropriate therefore that we wait in anticipation for *Christ's birth*, preparing ourselves to celebrate the *reason for this season* (Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar 39). Amidst the year-end sales, family holidays and office parties, have we earnestly prepared for Christmas interiorly?

A good indicator of our readiness for Christ's birth can be gleaned from our



response to today's gospel. Does Christ's apocalyptic proclamation engender fear within us, or does it instil a sense of anticipation? If we truly love God above all else, then we should not fear the prospect of meeting him. Indeed, if this prospect causes us to "die of fear" (Lk 21:26), we might still possess a disordered affection towards temporal things, thus being unready to be liberated. Attachments to this material world have embroiled many of us in the "cares of life" (Lk 21:34), causing us to forget that this transient world is merely part of our journey to the next.

Pope Francis tells us that "Seeking happiness in material things is a sure way of being unhappy". By removing Christ from Christmas, the secular world has turned Christmas into another money-making pursuit, losing the true significance of Christmas - *Ta Birth of Jesus as the Saviour of the World*. The Incarnation is God's greatest gift to humanity, the gift of his Son that we may have eternal life. *This* is the reason why Christmas is celebrated, and *this* is why we have to prepare ourselves for it (Jer 33:14-16).

Christmas is an inherently Christian feast with Christ as its core, and we should not be distracted to think otherwise (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, Homily, 28 Nov 2009) Likewise, Advent is a time of preparation for Christ's coming, a time for us to "build a crib for our God in our hearts" (St Josemaría, notes from a meditation, 25 Dec 1973). Christ cannot be born in our lives, if we are not yet ready for him; if we have not yet built this crib. Returning to ourselves, let us consider if we have been distracted by the superficial commercial celebratory mood of the season, or are we consciously *waiting*, preparing our interior lives that we may properly celebrate Jesus' Birth?

*Dominus veniet!* God is coming! (Entrance Antiphon, Tuesday of weeks 1-3 of Advent). This short exclamation opens the time of Advent and is heard in a special way during these four weeks. With this in mind, let our Adventide journey be a time of interior preparation, that we may be better prepared for the birth of God (1 Th 3:12-4:2) and stand erect with our heads held high to greet him when he comes (Lk 21:28).

## 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

Food is catered after all Sunday morning Masses as part of the Feast Day Celebrations!

### SECOND COLLECTION FOR POOR AND NEEDY

SSVP is having the 2nd collection for the poor and needy (Friends-In-Need, FINs) this weekend. Kindly and generously donate so that SSVP can continue to aid the FINs directly and indirectly via various programmes with your donations. We thank you for your generosity.

### EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION & HEALING

Come experience the peace and healing of Jesus on **6 Dec** at **8pm** at the main church. This session will be led by Fr Joseph Vaniyamthara from Divine Prayer Centre in Mangalore, India. All are welcome.

### SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Come and join us to spend an hour of grace in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary on **Sat 8 Dec, 12pm sharp to 1 pm** at the Main Church. Led by St Pio Ministry. All are welcome.

### GIFT PAMPHLET

This weekend, the Catholic Foundation is renewing its appeal for the GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) campaign to build a more vibrant, evangelistic and missionary Church. GIFT challenges every Catholic to make a regular pledge to support the operational and building needs of the archdiocese. Every Catholic is also encouraged to pray and volunteer for the archdiocese. More information can be found in the GIFT pamphlets that will be distributed during Mass, and at [gift.catholicfoundation.sg](http://gift.catholicfoundation.sg)

TRIDUUM & FEAST DAY 2018

# THANKSGIVING

REMEMBERING OUR BLESSINGS

**2 DEC (SUN) FEAST DAY**

**RENEW**  
in discipleship

**5PM\*** FEAST DAY MASS, with His Grace Archbishop William Goh  
**7, 9, 11AM** SUNDAY MASS + CELEBRATORY MEALS\*  
\*Blessing of PPC/NCC/SCC Leaders at 5pm Mass    \*after Morning Masses only

**FEAST DAY DINNER** **SOLD OUT!** *Serangoon Garden Country Club*  
**7PM, Tickets at \$45 per person**

### PENITENTIAL SERVICES IN SERANGOON DISTRICT

All services are held at 8pm.

**12 Dec (Wed) - Church of St Francis Xavier**

13 Dec (Thu) - Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

14 Dec (Fri) - Church of St. Vincent de Paul

17 Dec (Mon) - Church of the Transfiguration

18 Dec (Tue) - St Anne's Church

19 Dec (Wed) - Church of The Immaculate Heart of Mary

### CHRISTMAS CARD MAILING LIST

Have you changed your address? Are you new to the parish? Never gotten an SFX Christmas Card? Please update your address and any other details with the parish office or send an email to [secretariat@sfxchurch.sg](mailto:secretariat@sfxchurch.sg). We want to make sure you get your Christmas card!

### ADVENT PRAYER TREES

What better gift for Christmas than the gift of prayer? Let the Holy Spirit guide you in praying intentionally for someone this Advent - either to return to the Sacraments, or to be open to knowing our Lord and receiving the Greatest Gift of JESUS this season! **Write their name(s) on a tag and hang it on the prayer trees near the sanctuary in Church.** As a faith community, we will pray for all these intentions throughout Advent.

### CHRISTMAS ICED COOKIE DECORATION

Learn the art of making beautifully iced cookies and present them as personalised gifts! In a 2-hour session on **Sat 8 Dec, 10am - 12noon**, learn how to make icing with the correct consistency, how to add colour and be equipped with some basic piping skills. Take home a cookie recipe and a set of 4 cookies that you have personally piped in the session. Do note that cookies will be pre-baked and pre-cut but there will be a demonstration and the recipe shared. **The cost for this session is \$80.** Register and make payment at the Parish Office during office hours. Registration closes this Sun 2 Dec. All proceeds will go to the SFX Renovation Fund.

### GIFT: CHRISTMAS CONCERT BY SFX YOUTH CHOIR

Our very own Youth Choir is putting up a Christmas concert on **Sat 22 Dec, 8 pm** at SFX! Titled "Gift", our Youth Choir will showcase and harmonise their beautiful voices to our all-time favourite hymns and carols. Come and support them and get your tickets today! Bring your family and friends too, for an evening of music and fellowship! **Tickets are priced at \$20 each.** For ticketing enquiries, please contact Thud Chee at 9632 3489 or Melissa at 9363 6516. All proceeds will go to the SFX Renovation Fund.

### FLOWERS & CRAFTS SALE BY THE LEGION OF MARY

On the weekend of **8/9 Dec**, which also coincides with the Feast of The Immaculate Conception on **8 Dec**, the Legion of Mary will be selling fresh flowers as well as potted plants at the Church foyer. There will also be handcrafted items for sale, made by our friends from Cheshire Home. All proceeds will go directly to the SFX Renovation Fund.

# Advent: Let's make room for Jesus



**“Advent” means “coming” in Latin. Some may ask, “hasn’t Christ already come?” Or “isn’t he already with us?” Well, in the lead-up to Christmas, we prepare for the parties, gifts and holidays but crowd Jesus out of our hearts. As such, to experience a truly meaningful Christmas, let’s make time, during Advent, to:**

- recollect Jesus’ coming into the world as a baby all those years ago;
- remember that he wants to be part of our lives now; and
- look forward to his second coming.

Advent is a time of prayer, abstinence and fasting. However, unlike during Lent, we do so with joyful anticipation. The purpose of all this is to prepare ourselves for the Lord’s coming, to make space in our busy lives for him. As we form a closer relationship with our Lord and put our trust in him, surely we will be blessed more abundantly. After all, he is a faithful God who keeps his covenants and shows mercy to those who love him.

Let’s translate that excitement at the thought of new clothes, parties and presents to **excitement to welcome the king of kings into our lives.**

Just as we clean and spruce up our houses to welcome guests, let’s **declutter our inner life to enable Christ to come in.**

Instead of obsessing over party preparations and gift lists, let’s consider how best we can have that **intimate relationship with Jesus**, who is the reason for the season.

Our theme for this Advent week is *Hope* 

What is **hope**? As Catholics, hope means much more than mere wishful thinking or a strong desire for a certain outcome. Rather, hope is a **confident and favourable expectation, the happy anticipation of good.** Ours is a living hope given to us through Christ’s resurrection and God’s unfailing promises.

When we hope in the Lord, we are filled with joy. As we put our trust in him and walk in his ways, we can rest assured that because we are so dearly loved, he will always provide – that no matter how bad things seem, he is working behind the scenes to turn our situation around for our good.



**This week, take the time to:** \_\_\_\_\_

- Recall the times when God has been faithful to his promises in your life and that of others.
- Pay special attention to the daily mass readings and consider which verses give hope to you.
- Is there someone you know who needs to hear words of hope? Reach out to that person.
- Pray for those who are in despair and in need of hope in their lives.
- Take a ten-minute break from your busy schedule. Sit quietly. Listen to God’s voice in the silence of your heart. Know how much He loves you. Rest and trust in him.
- Think about your family. Who needs God’s hope? Pray for this family member today and let him / her know it. Even better, suggest that you pray together.
- Consider what you can do to bring God’s hope to others. This could be as simple as sharing about the blessings God has given to you or undertaking a project to help the needy in your neighborhood.



**HOLY FATHER’S  
PRAYER INTENTIONS  
THIS MONTH**

## IN THE SERVICE OF THE TRANSMISSION OF FAITH

That people, who are involved in the service and transmission of faith, may find, in their dialogue with culture, a language suited to the conditions of the present time.

## IN THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER 2018

### CONDOLENCES

We offer our prayers to the families of the following who have returned to the Lord:

1. Francois Mrs Dumont Anna Florence
2. Simon Lim Leng Joo
3. Kathleen Low Wai Kaeng

### BAPTISM

We welcome:

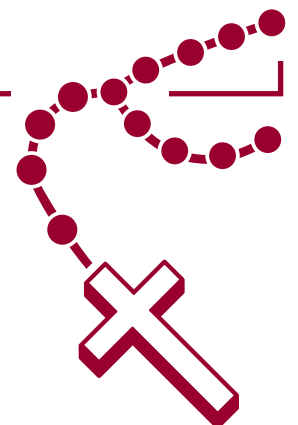
1. Elijah Michael Thomas
2. Alistair James Adalia
3. Aenea Cara Song
4. Imelda Chee Wan Ting

## Prayer

**Lord,**

*Thank you that my hope in you can never lead to disappointment. During this time of remembrance and preparation, help me focus on you, the light of the world. I want to be ready to welcome and receive you. And as I wait, may I do so “rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, constant in prayer”, confident that you will work in all situations for my good.*

*Amen.*





## Mass for the Sick and Elderly



The annual Mass for the Sick and Elderly was held on 25 Nov, the Feast of Christ the King. A record turn-out of 120 sick/elderly, accompanied by their caregivers attended. Youth volunteers from RCIY and catechism Level 8 warmly received and ushered the elderly.

More than 47 persons received peace and restoration of grace through the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the start of Mass. In his homily, Fr Ben rightly reminded us to recognise Christ as the King of the Universe and in our lives, and to have no fear of adversities. He also exhorted us to pray for the caregivers who also need the compassion of the Lord to minister to the sick/elderly. The high point of the Mass was the anointing of the sick/elderly with holy oil and blessings, accompanied by beautiful hymns. It was a particularly moving experience for many!



At the end of the Mass, Divine Mercy Medals embedded in prayer cards, and flowers specially prepared by generous donors, were blessed and presented. Thereafter, all were invited to sumptuous refreshments and fellowship at the canteen. Many came away from the Mass with a refreshed spirit, consoled heart and restored grace.

We are grateful to the many who volunteered their time and energy in planning and executing the event. Parishioners both young and old showed how we can come together as a church to pray in solidarity with our sick, elderly and infirm. A number of non-Catholic Christian friends also helped out - bless them too for helping in solidarity! A truly prayerful and loving community, reaching out to the sick and vulnerable and helping them encounter Jesus, our KING!

### 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:** Reopen in Dec 2019

#### 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 [infbaptism@sfxchurch.sg](mailto: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](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg)