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**Disciples  
Making Disciples**

## *The Human Family: an Icon of God*

Feast of the Holy Family of  
Jesus, Mary and Joseph  
30 Dec 2018

**Sir 3:2-6, 12-14**  
**Col 3:12-21**  
**Lk 2:41-52**

A few days ago, we celebrated the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord where the Holy Family with the new-born Infant was first presented to us. Luke tells us that the shepherds had hurried to Bethlehem to see for themselves the new-born savior as revealed by an angel. They would find there an infant "wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger". In Bethlehem they were in awe as they beheld "Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger".

In just ten verses, Luke mentions three times that the Infant Jesus was in a "manger" - a feeding trough (Lk 2:7,12,16). Luke wants to impress on the reader that Jesus has come to offer himself as food to renew the world. Today, all of us are deeply grateful that Jesus continues to feed, heal and build us up at the Tables of the Word and Eucharist - the two parts of the Mass. We acknowledged this in the General Intercessions at Christmas when we prayed, "Make a new beginning with us, Lord." Enlightened by Scripture or having received the lavish and rich fare from the "Table of God's word" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 51), we become more aware of how Christ has blessed us and are able to offer prayers to God for the salvation of all.

The first place to share the joy of this "new beginning" in Christ is the family.



*"God is the Trinity, he is a communion of love... The human family, in a certain sense, is an icon of the Trinity because of its interpersonal love and the fruitfulness of this love"*  
- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI says it is significant that "God wanted to be born and to grow up in a human family". In choosing the holy family of Joseph and Mary, God "...consecrated the family as the first and ordinary means of his encounter with humanity...the human family thus became an icon of God! God is the Trinity, he is a communion of love... The human family, in a certain sense, is an icon of the Trinity because of its interpersonal love and the fruitfulness of this love" (Angelus, 2006, 2009).

This "fruitfulness" is not limited to procreation. The Catechism tells us, "The fruitfulness of conjugal love extends to the fruits of the moral, spiritual and supernatural life that parents hand on to their children by education...It is in the bosom of the family that parents are 'by word and example...the first heralds of the faith with regard to their children'... Thus the home is the first school of Christian life" (CCC1656-1657). Today's first and second readings describe the hallmarks of a Christian household - obedience and respect towards parents; compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience among family members so that the peace of Christ radiates in a Christian home.

In today's gospel, Luke writes of Joseph and Mary as being our role models for the passing on of the faith in the family. Joseph and Mary have always brought

Jesus to the annual pilgrimage feast of Passover in Jerusalem (cf Lk 2:41). However, on this particular pilgrimage when Jesus was twelve years old, he had stayed behind in the Temple and was found "sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions" - questions which Jesus himself answered, thus feeding and nourishing their spiritual void, for Luke writes that the religious leaders "were astounded at his intelligence and his replies" (Lk 1:47). Luke also shows here that by this time, Jesus had already become aware of his identity as God's son, telling Mary and Joseph, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?" (Lk 2:49). Jesus' reply reveals to us that "it is necessary first of all to do God's will, and that the spiritual bond is worth more than the bond of kinship" (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI).

In this octave of Christmas as we continue to contemplate God coming to share in our humanity through the human family, may parents welcome the mission God has entrusted to them, "The Christian family is aware that children are a gift and a project of God... it cannot consider that it possesses them, the family is called to educate them in the greatest freedom, which is precisely that of saying 'yes' to God in order to do his will" (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, 2009).

## Announcements

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

### NO CANTEEN

There will be no canteen this weekend.

### PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE

Please note that the parish office will be closed at the following times:

**Mon 31 Dec** - Open till **12pm**

**Tue 1 Jan** - Closed

### HOLY HOUR

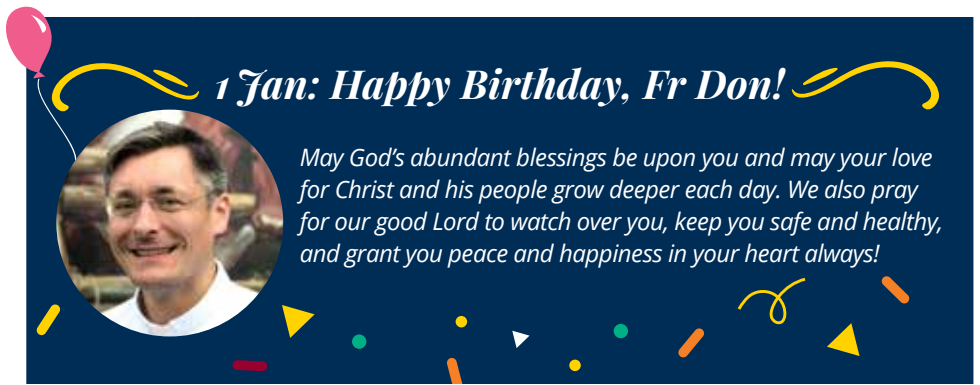
Come spend some time with our Lord at Holy Hour, on **Thu 3 Jan, 8.30pm** in the main church.

### CROSSROADS BY CENACLE SISTERS

The Cenacle Sisters are conducting a Crossroads retreat for young people (20-35 years old) to reflect on where they have been, where they would like to go, and to prayerfully discern the choices in their lives. It will be held on **Sat 5 Jan, 9am to Sun 6 Jan, 1pm**, at Choice Retreat House, 47 Jurong West St 42. For those who are interested, please register at [www.cenaclemission.com](http://www.cenaclemission.com). Contribution is at \$180.

### CARITAS SINGAPORE: PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS COURSE 2019

For all Catholics and all who are interested in the foundations of Ethics and Moral Theology. This is a one-year long systematic course in Moral Theology consisting of 6 individual modules, conducted by Rev Fr David Garcia, OP. This course will run **every Fri, from 7.30pm - 9.30pm**, starting on **Fri 11 Jan**. It will be held at Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo Street. For more information and registration, please refer to [www.caritas-singapore.org](http://www.caritas-singapore.org) or email [formation@caritas-singapore.org](mailto:formation@caritas-singapore.org).



### New Year's Mass Times

**Mon 31 Dec**  
**10pm Paraliturgya, 10.30pm Mass**

*\*Morning and evening mass is as usual.*

*\*\*There will be light refreshments and fellowship in the canteen after mass.*

**Tue 1 Jan**  
**8.30am only**

### THE CATHOLIC LAWYERS' GUILD (CLG) EXPANDED PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES

The CLG has expanded its Pro Bono Legal Services, to include Legal Representation in Court and Mediation, in addition to the giving of legal advice. At the present moment, the Pro Bono Legal Clinic of the CLG operates only at Agape Village. To ensure outreach to the larger community, CLG will be setting up additional Satellite Legal Clinics at these other locations - St Teresa's, Holy Family, Divine Mercy and St Joseph's (Bukit Timah). Please see the publicity posters put up and refer the needy to the CLG Pro Bono Legal Clinics for assistance.

### BOOK OF PSALMS: BIBLE STUDY BY ARCHDIOCESAN BIBLICAL APOSTOLATE

Come and learn more about the Book of Psalms, the only book apart from the four Gospels which is used in every mass. The bible study sessions are run by Archdiocesan Biblical Apostolate and taught by Fr Ferdinand Purnomo OCD. There are two options for class timings:

#### 16 sessions: 22 Jan – 28 May 2019

Tue mornings, 9.30am-11.30am  
CAEC Building (2 Highland Road, Singapore 549102)  
No classes on: 5 Feb, 19 Mar, 23 Apr

#### 15 sessions: 21 Jan-27 May 2019

Mon evenings, 7.30pm-9.30pm  
CANA Catholic Centre (55 Waterloo Street, Singapore 187954)  
No classes on: 4 Feb, 18 Mar, 22 Apr, 20 May

#### Course Fees

\$150 (if paid by 21 Jan), \$160 (if paid from 22 Jan)

For more info, please email [aba\\_secretariat@catholic.org.sg](mailto:aba_secretariat@catholic.org.sg) or call 6280 0354 from Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm. Register at [bit.ly/2GfwK6L](http://bit.ly/2GfwK6L)



# A Treasure in the Forest

Madeleine Tan reflects on the recent SiGN mission trip to Myanmar.



Madeleine Tan (2nd from left) with the children of Nazareth Bush School

I was compelled to re-examine my love for Jesus and how that translates into action. In particular, I was moved by the children's profound hunger, for God, knowledge, and something more than what this world can offer. I wondered how a seed of such longing and faith could flourish in a place of material lack. If we are but a mere dim and imperfect reflection of God, how vast and deep can Love itself possibly be then?

My only fitting response: **"Stir up a deeper faith in me"**. Therein a place of such simplicity yet immense love lies the call to keep my gaze on my Maker, the source of all life, love and joy.

The children asked me again on the last night, "Will you come back again next year, and bring your friends to meet us please?" This reflection is my invitation to you, to come and meet the pure hearts of NBS.

*If you're interested to find out more about SiGN mission trips, please contact Anne at 9741 9634.*

It's easy to miss the woody and almost hidden entrance to the Nazareth Bush School (NBS) in Myanmar, yet as Fr Benjamin of NBS aptly puts it, *"hundreds drive pass each day without knowing and move on with their lives; yet those who do find themselves venturing into the woods to discover the treasure.. there they remain"*.

This quote resonates with my experience during the SiGN mission this year. Last year, I made a promise

to the children of NBS to return to Myanmar. "God, this is me holding up my end of the deal" were the words that marked a journey of rediscovering the presence of God.

From the soulful singing of the children to the heartfelt hospitality of the priests and caretakers, the cheery conversations with the youth, or generosity of the people, each moment reflected man's immense capacity to love God and others.







Looking for more Information?  
visit [www.sfxchurch.sg](http://www.sfxchurch.sg)

# Christmas Mass



## 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)