



**Disciples
Making Disciples**



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“Don't sin anymore”

5th Sunday of Lent
7 Apr 2019

Is 43:16-21
Phil 3:8-14
Jn 8:1-11

We have finally arrived at the last Sunday in Lent.

On “Spy Wednesday” in ten days’ time, the day we remember Judas’ visit to the chief priests to betray Jesus, the liturgical colour of purple which symbolises repentance, will be worn for the last time this Lent. The liturgical colour changes on Maundy Thursday to white which is a symbol for light. It reminds us of our purity and innocence which has been restored by Jesus through our baptism into him. We have been adopted as God’s children in Christ. We have been made “children of light” to expose the “fruitless deeds of darkness” in this world (cf Eph 5:8,11).

What are we to do, however, if we find we have let Lent slip by? For whatever reasons, we may not have persevered in deeper prayer, fasting and almsgiving or self-sacrifice – and now there is regret. The liturgy for this last Sunday in Lent affirms us that even at this “late” juncture, it is still a good time to “start” Lent and be more open to God!

The first reading reminds us that we are chosen by God (cf Is 43:20). He has chosen us to be “formed” in his love and mercy just as he had chosen the ancient Israelites. Isaiah recalls how God had delivered the Israelites from Egyptian slavery into the Promised Land but because they did not keep God’s commandments and adopted

pagan practices and worship, Isaiah prophesied that God will allow their unfaithful alliances to lead them into a 70-year captivity in Babylon. In this time, Judah will realise their erroneous ways and God will then enable their return to Judah to try again to live in fidelity as God’s chosen people (cf Ez 1:1-2). These events came to pass between 597-520 BC. The responsorial psalm in which Israel praises God for delivering Zion from bondage vindicates God’s wisdom in letting the Babylonian captivity take its course. The long exile had borne the fruit of fidelity God had intended (cf Ps 125).

This was not to last however. By the time Jesus came, the Temple authorities had turned worship into a legalistic burden with the law being interpreted for their own purposes. In today’s gospel, the scribes and Pharisees, knowing Jesus’ patience with “tax collectors and sinners” (Mt 11:19), wanted to trap Jesus by dragging before him a woman they had caught in adultery. If Jesus spoke against her stoning which was prescribed by Moses, he would be disobeying the Mosaic Law; if he allowed the woman to be stoned, he would be breaking the Roman law which alone had prerogative over capital punishment.

Jesus responds to their heartless persistence by writing something on the ground. He then says to them, “If there is one of you who has not sinned, let him be the first to throw a stone at her”. One by one, beginning with the eldest, the scribes and Pharisees went away and Jesus was left alone with the woman (cf Jn 8:7-9). St Augustine describes this moment as “*misera et Misericordia*” – wretchedness and Mercy. Jesus then addresses the woman,

“Has no one condemned you?...Neither do I condemn you...go away, and don't sin anymore” (Jn 8:11). Jesus’ words, according to St Augustine, reveals his “condemnation” of sin but love and mercy for the sinner, “The Lord did also condemn, but condemned sins, not man. For if he were a patron of sin, he would say, ‘neither will I condemn you; go, live as you will; be secure in my deliverance; however much you sin, I will deliver you from all punishment’. He said not this” (Commentary on John’s Gospel, tract. 33, 6).

Knowing that sin offends God and separates us from him, and knowing how he loves and wants to “form” us (cf Isa 43), let us place our wretchedness and sins before Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation today. There will be no condemnation – *misera et Misericordia* – our wretchedness before his great Mercy. Jesus will urge us to live anew as the “children of light” we are meant to be – “Go...don't sin anymore”.



**“The Lord did also condemn,
but condemned sins,
not man.”**

- ST AUGUSTINE

Announcements

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

HAPPY 71ST BIRTHDAY, FR ANTONIO! (11 APR)

We thank God for the gift of Fr Antonio, and praise God for blessing him so abundantly the past 71 years. We pray for God's continued anointing upon him, and also for the flame of passion and zeal for the service of his Church and his people to forever burn brightly in Fr Antonio's heart.

SSVP 2ND COLLECTION

There will be a second collection by the Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) this weekend to help the poor and needy in monthly rations and other aid programmes. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

SFX COLUMBARIUM NOTICE

SFX Columbarium renovations at the basement of the parsonage will commence from **Wed 1 May**. Please be assured that the remains of your loved ones will be treated with dignity and respect during the renovations. The niches will be covered with styrofoam and wood for protection. As loose items such as flowers, ornaments and rosaries may be dislodged or damaged during this process, we sincerely request that you remove them by **Sun 21 Apr**. You may reinstate them after the renovations are completed. **After Sun 21 Apr, we appreciate your understanding that any remaining loose items will be removed and disposed.**

PENITENTIAL SERVICES IN SERANGOON DISTRICT AT 8 PM

Wed 3 Apr - Church of St Vincent de Paul

Thu 4 Apr - Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Mon 8 Apr - Church of the Transfiguration

Tue 9 Apr - St Anne's Church

Wed 10 Apr - Church of St Francis Xavier

Thu 11 Apr - Church of The Immaculate Heart of Mary

CALLING ALL SFX CER ALUMNI

SFX has been chosen for a parish CER from **6 - 10 Nov 2019**. We are calling for all SFX parishioners who have gone through CER to step up and serve in the following areas: F&B, intercessory prayer, musicians (guitarist, drummer, bassist, keyboardist) and more. Registration will take place after all masses this weekend at the front porch and parish centre foyer. Alternatively, you can also register online via tinyurl.com/SFXCERManpower.

Let us put our hands on the plough to till the soil of SFX together, and Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord! More details on the retreat will be given soon.

VOLUNTEERS FOR "FEED THE HUNGRY" PROJECT

We are calling for volunteers for our "Feed the Hungry" project. There are two ways you could help:

1) Be an ambassador of goodwill

Identify a beneficiary in your neighborhood, workplace or school. It may be a foreign worker, the lonely or elderly who live on their own, cleaners or co-workers. Then register your gift bag request (multiple bags/recipients allowed) at the booth at front porch. Details on bag collection on Divine Mercy weekend will be announced later.

2) Pack and distribute gift bags

Come as a community to help pack and distribute the gift bags! Make a date with us on **Sat 27 Apr, 9am - 1pm** and **Sun 28 Apr, 8am - 1pm** at the SFX Room, Parish Centre, Level 2.

To register for gift bag requests and as volunteers, please submit your name and contact details at the registration desk at the front porch. The forms are also available at the Parish Office.

Please also remember to bring back your Lenten money boxes next weekend (13/14 Apr) and place it on the table in the main church, to the left of the altar.

PARISH FORMATION PROGRAMME 2019: IGNATIAN CONTEMPLATION & DISCERNMENT

Struggling to hear God speak? Finding new ways to enter deeper into Scripture? Not sure how the Bible can help me to pray? Come join us as we learn and explore St Ignatius' method of prayer, which brings scripture to life, allowing God to speak clearly and guide us in our daily decisions, through the Living Word!

This third session of the first module Discipleship & Prayer will be held on **Mon 8 Apr, 8 - 10pm at the main church**. All are invited, so grab your family and friends and sign up now, at tinyurl.com/DMDRCRP2019!

RCIY WANTS YOU FOR ITS NEW JOURNEY!

RCIY is looking to expand our service team to better serve in the new RCIY journey beginning **16 Jun to May 2020**. If you wish to journey with seekers of truth, experience beauty in Jesus Christ and the Catholic Church, as well as learn and grow in faith through community and service, do scan the QR code or sign up at the following link to indicate your interest: <https://goo.gl/forms/V7aV4JHhwj7cnGI92>



LOVE, FOOLISHLY: A LENTEN DRAMA RETREAT

Journey with Jesus as he enters Jerusalem and embraces his Passion. Through imaginative contemplation and pray-acting, enter into and share in his Passion. Will you be a fool for Christ?

Date: Fri 12 Apr, 7pm - Sun 14 Apr, 5 pm

Venue: Montfort Centre (622 Upper Bukit Timah Road, S678117)

Contribution: \$345 (Single) \$270 (Twin)

Registration: anthonyatmontfort@gmail.com or contact 9631 1943

RECRUITMENT FOR SSVP SHOP SUPERVISOR AND ASSISTANT

The SSVP Shop (501 Geylang Road) is hiring one full-time Retail Shop Supervisor and one full-time Retail Sales Assistant cum cashier to operate and manage the social enterprise, which collects and sells pre-owned goods. Working hours are from Tue to Sun, 10am - 6pm. Applicants must be Singapore citizens or PR; able to engage with volunteers and run shop operations; and have good interpersonal and communication skills. All applications will be kept confidential, and only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for an interview. If you are interested, please email your resume to: Melanie.Tan@ssvpsingapore.org. The closing date for application is **Mon 15 Apr**.

RECRUITMENT FOR CANOSSAVILLE STUDENT CARE TEACHERS

Canossaville is recruiting ex-teachers/retired teachers/those with relevant experience or qualifications to be part of their dynamic Canossian Catholic family. We warmly invite those interested to be Student Care teachers to come for a chit-chat session to find out more about the role.

Date: Fri 26 Apr from 4.30pm – 6pm OR Sat 27 Apr from 9am - 10.30am

Contact: HR@canossaville.org.sg or WhatsApp/SMS/Call 8131 8614

URGENT TEMPORARY COOK NEEDED FOR SFX KINDERGARTEN

SFX Kindergarten is urgently looking for a temporary cook to prepare meals for 120 kids and 20 adults, with no assistant provided. No marketing is needed except to get fresh vegetables. The cook will also be required to wash dishes after meals. Please contact Angela at 6280 8929 if you could provide this service to prepare meals for the children. You will be required to start as soon as possible, and be available for one month.



HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

UNIVERSAL - WORKERS IN WAR ZONES For doctors and their humanitarian collaborators in war zones, who risk their lives to save the lives of others.

IN THE MONTH OF MAR 2019

CONDOLENCES

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

1. Low Min Ting
2. Lim Poey Tin
3. Ng Hoon Kang John
4. Antoinette Lim Sok Eng
5. Chew Keng Neo Rosaline

INFANT/ ADULT BAPTISMS

We welcome the following:

6. Liam Tobias Mowe
7. Lim Rui Ze Lucas
8. Chua Jia En Bridget
9. Chua Jia He Matthew
10. Li Enyi Nathanael
11. Alexa Layne Bligh-Nerva
12. Aidan Marc Tan Meng Yao
13. Sadie Anne Tan

LIVING IN THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

Our Secondary 4 brothers and sisters from SFX and Church of St Bernadette participated in a combined-parish Confirmation Retreat held from 22 to 24 Mar. Themed "Life in the Spirit", the retreat was held at the Church of the Transfiguration. Four of them have shared with us what moved and inspired them during these three days.



Alyssa Woo

"I came to this retreat with reservations – an unfamiliar church, worries about life outside of church, and my lack of certainty of my relationship with God... How was I supposed to know whether I was ready for confirmation? Then, the outpouring happened. Think of a dark room covered in carpets, lit only by the light of candles and the monstrance. Songs of Praise and Worship, worming into and resonating through my soul and my bones. Rhythmic chanting in God's language as the facilitators prayed over us. When I looked upon the Eucharist in Father Brian's hands, it took my breath away. During reconciliation, I poured out my worries to the priest, and later as I stared into the monstrance, I felt all my masks chip away and fall until I saw only myself looking back at me. During this retreat, I may not have shaken. I may not have been moved to tears. I may not have been overwhelmed by the Holy Spirit and fallen. Yet, this does not diminish the lightness I felt. I know now that I am blessed by a love beyond human comprehension and that no matter how I'm terrified, no matter what challenges I face, the Trinity is with me and supporting me in whatever I do."



Joshua Cordeiro

"Coming into this retreat, I was lost, broken, empty and so far away from God. I was so blind to love around me, and my life was filled with darkness. All my days, I never realised that I have always been held in his hands and his embrace. Through this retreat, Jesus opened my eyes and filled my empty heart with his great love. Despite my imperfections, he never ceased to shower me with his love, and he accepts and loves me for who I am. Truly, Jesus is the light that burns in the darkness. His love has set my heart ablaze. I am so thankful for receiving and experiencing the Holy Spirit. He set a fire in my soul, that I cannot contain and control. During the outpouring of the Spirit session, I felt at peace and loved. When the Holy Eucharist was brought in front of my face and the facilitators prayed over me in tongues, I could hear the Holy Spirit speaking to me, and I saw Jesus standing right in front of me. As my right arm began to tremble and tears gushed out of my eyes, I felt so vulnerable and unworthy to be standing in front of my Saviour and Redeemer. Pouring out my heart to him, I heard his voice. I felt his love surround me and felt the Holy Spirit renewing my soul. This retreat has really blessed me with the Holy Spirit and brought me back to the lover of my soul."



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

20 Feb Onwards,
Temporarily closed

LIBRARY

Temporarily closed

COLUMBARIUM

Daily: 7am - 9pm
Will be closed from **1 Jun - 31 July**

CANTEEN

Temporarily closed

"Wandering into this retreat, I felt stressed, empty and uncertain. Stressed because of school, empty because of exhaustion and uncertain due to my worries about whether I would receive Jesus and the Holy Spirit during the retreat. As the sessions, adoration and masses went by, I started to connect more with God and his word, learning that confirmation was just the start of my catechetical journey, and not the end. The teachings of the sessions echoed through me, that we are called by the Heavenly Father to go out and spread the good news to the world, as well as to continue to live in his ways and be like him. I realised and learnt that being a Catholic was so much more than just attending catechism sessions, bible sharings, and going to church for an hour on Sundays.

Although these things are the least we can do to initiate our journey as children of God, I feel that God has given me the capability and the resources to do so much more than just that. Right now, I am but a small seed which has just grown its roots in the rich soil of God's presence, and my journey to become a disciple is far from complete. I want to strive to be more Christ-like and spread his good word to those around me."



Ryan Chua



Solana Mendoza

"Blessed. Scared. Sad. Angry. Happy. Lonely. These are the words that sum up my challenging confirmation journey. There have been ups and downs and it is a rocky path that I have to take. However, I know that I will get through it as long as I focus on God. There's this bible verse that I can really relate to. '*I can do anything through Christ who gives me strength*' - Phil 4:13. This verse motivates me to be strong and to keep going because Christ is with me always. He gives me the strength I need to push on and not lose faith.

Through the many retreats I have attended, I have grown so much not just as a person but also in my faith. The retreats have really helped to increase my faith and strengthen my relationship with God. The recent L10 retreat in particular stood out for me because I learnt about evangelising, loving people, community, what the Holy Spirit is, my identity and how I can grow to be a disciple of Christ. I think I am ready to be confirmed this year and to accept the challenges as a disciple of Christ and to take my faith to the next level by being a responsible and independent Catholic. Truly, God works in mysterious ways and it is indeed amazing how he can touch so many lives including mine. I have decided to follow Jesus and it's a decision I won't regret making. Jesus is my saviour, stronghold, teacher, friend and someone I can turn to in my times of struggle - for he does say to me '*Come to me all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*' - Matt 11:28"

ANOINTING OF THE SICK



The sacrament can be administered to any Catholic awaiting serious surgery, suffering from serious illness or weakened by old age. Anointing may be given before admission 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