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**Disciples
Making Disciples**

Christ Be Our Guiding Light!

Solemnity of the
Epiphany of the Lord
6 Jan 2019

Is 60:1-6
Eph 3:2-3,5-6
Mt 2:1-12

Did Christmas bring to our homes, workplaces and relationships the Peace, Joy, and Hope we wished; or has the "Christmas Magic" all but dissipated? Only two weeks has elapsed since Christmas but already it seems like a feast of yesteryear, gone by!

Though we may lament this, the readings today encourage us to persevere, reminding us that Christ is ever present and relevant in our lives. To this end, the gospel today presents two responses to the birth of Christ; that of Herod and the Magi.

Herod: The reaction of Herod is the reason why we have the Feast of The Holy Innocents on December 28. Prompted by his indifference to Jewish messianic hopes and motivated by pride, Herod did not see Christ as a saviour but a threat. He thus plotted to kill his creator, incarnated in the form of a helpless baby. When this failed, he murdered all the boys in Bethlehem who were two years old and under. Like Herod, we too may still be ignorant of the presence of Christ despite the spiritual renewal urged on us at Christmas.

When we lack knowledge and conviction of how Christ has come to be Emmanuel - "God-with-us"- by his Incarnation, we also lack the Peace, Joy and Happiness

"The destiny of every person is symbolized in this journey of the Magi of the East: our life is a journey, illuminated by the lights which brighten our way, to find the fullness of truth and love which we Christians recognize in Jesus, the Light of the World"

- Pope Francis, Epiphany Homily 2014



that his presence brings. It thus becomes easier to get angry and plot against others and despair. If we believe that our "light has come [and that] the glory of the Lord shines" on us (Is 60:1), we would offer our fears to Christ, letting his peace guide us through life's challenges.

The Magi: The Magi, unlike Herod actively sought Christ, awaiting a sign for his arrival. They were physically distant but not spiritually distant from Him. So when Christ's star appeared, they left their homes to adore Him.

Spiritually attuned with God, before anyone or anything else, the Magi had already discerned the nature of the Child they were seeking; their gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh acknowledged Christ as King, Divine High Priest and Sacrificial death. Gold was a gift for Kings; frankincense, was offered to God in Temple worship (Ex. 30:37); and myrrh, was used by the High Priest as an anointing oil (Ex. 30:23), and to prepare bodies for burial.

Moreover, the journey of the Magi reminds us of the journey each of us has to take to find Christ. The gospel specifically indicates that Christ was visited at home, not the manger that he was born in. This means that the Magi were on the road for some time,

faithfully following the star (Pope Francis - Epiphany homily 2014).

Sometimes seeking Christ may be difficult, especially when the darkness of worldly attitudes and values surround us. In hardship is our first reaction to search for Christ remembering that, the shining star, is always there to guide us.

The Joy, Peace and Hope which Christmas brings are not fleeting feelings which we revel in and quickly disavow at the end of the year. At home family problems continue, at work deadlines resume, in school exams are ever around the corner...

This seems to be the perennial problem each of us face this time each year, we feel it! The merriness of the season slowly engulfed by the old tensions. To this, will we respond like Herod and let worldliness dictate our response? Or will we be like the Magi who always had their eyes fixed on things above; always seeking an encounter with Christ and falling to adore him when we finally find him through overcoming our trials. (cf. Leo the Great, Homily 3 on the Epiphany). May Christ be ever present in our lives and guiding light for we who seek him!

Announcements

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

CANTEEN

The St Pio Prayer Group will be running the canteen this weekend. All proceeds will go directly to the SFX Renovation Fund. It's a new year, so make some new friends and come fellowship with your old friends.

CHARISMATIC

The first Charismatic service in 2019 is on **Mon 7 Jan 8pm** at the **Parish Hall**. Praise and worship followed by healing session. All are welcome.

ANAWIM

The next session will be on **Tue 8 Jan at 8pm** in the canteen. We welcome anyone who wants to rediscover some aspects of our faith and to live it more meaningfully and joyfully. If interested, please contact Theresa at 9643 7132.



HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

FOR EVANGELISATION - YOUNG PEOPLE

That young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world.

IN THE MONTH OF DEC 2018

CONDOLENCES

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

1. Francis Loi Teck Chong
2. Esther Joan Lim Poh Hwa
3. Mary Lee Eng Keow
4. Judy Chia Kwee Kee

BAPTISM

We welcome:

1. Alyssa Toh Kai Xin

ARCHDIOCESAN CATHOLIC COUNCIL FOR ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE (ACCED): WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2019

Bring along Christian friends for prayer, reflections, songs and fellowship to promote unity. All prayer services are from 8 - 9pm followed by fellowship.

Fri 18 Jan - St Thomas Orthodox Syrian Cathedral (650 Yio Chu Kang Rd, S787075)

Tue 22 Jan - Covenant Community Methodist Church (11 Blackmore Drive, MGS Chapel, Level 3, S599986)

Wed 23 Jan - The Salvation Army Bishan Chinese Corps (20 Bishan Street 22, Sanctuary, Basement 1, S579768)

Fri 25 Jan - Church of St. Vincent de Paul (301 Yio Chu Kang Rd, S805910)

CARITAS: PERSONAL MORAL COMPASS COURSE 2019

For all Catholics and those who are interested in the foundations of Ethics and Moral Theology. This is a one-year, systematic course in Moral Theology comprising 6 individual modules, conducted by Rev Fr David Garcia, OP and organised by CARITAS Singapore. Starting from **Fri 11 Jan**, this course will run **every Fri, from 7.30pm - 9.30pm**. It will be held at Catholic Centre, 55 Waterloo Street. For more information and registration, please refer to www.caritas-singapore.org or email formation@caritas-singapore.org.

LANDINGS: WELCOMING RETURNING CATHOLICS

The 2019 Landings programme will commence at Church of the Holy Spirit on **Mon 4 Mar** and Cathedral of the Good Shepherd on **Thu 25 Apr**. We invite Catholics seeking a reconnection with the Faith and those interested in this ministry to participate in this 10-week programme. Interested participants will need to register. Registration closes on **Mon 18 Feb** (for programme in Church of the Holy Spirit) and **Thur 18 Apr** (for programme in Cathedral of the Good Shepherd).

An evening of Returning Stories will be held on **Fri 22 Mar** at the Cathedral of the Good Shepherd. You will hear stories of Catholics returning to the church - of their struggles, challenges, grace and reconciliation. Please email returning@landings.org.sg or find out more at www.landings.org.sg.

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

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

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 or call 6280 0354 from Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm. Register at bit.ly/2GfwK6L

A deLIGHTful CHRISTmas Party

The night was balmy after a scorching afternoon and the grounds and church all ready for our little **CHRIST**mas party. Held on **Fri 28 Dec**, this party was on a smaller scale than our last 2 fiestas due to the forthcoming renovations but it was a deLIGHTful evening nevertheless.

Our SFX kindergarten children entertained with their energetic songs and dance, with the theme of not giving up when facing challenges and having the faith and perseverance to carry on. There were also performances by the St Maximillian Kolbe Choir and the Christmas pageant, helmed by members from Children's Liturgy. The final segment saw a beautifully made nativity cake cut by our 3 priests and a hilarious charades section. The night ended with our famous "Disciples Making Disciples" dance and a singalong.

We thank and praise our Lord for this opportunity to share our joy with our community and the neighbourhood. And as we move into the new year with changes and challenges ahead, we continue to pray and ask that his will always be done.



Ariel view of the christmas party



Fr Ben giving an opening prayer



Christmas pageant by Children Liturgy



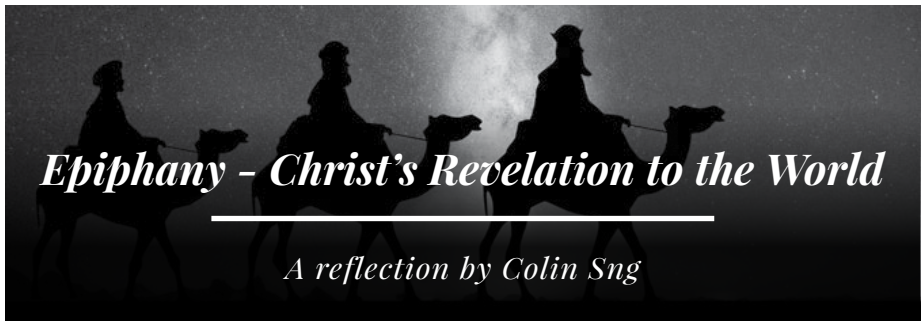
Singalong with "Disciples Making Disciples" dance



St Maximillian Kolbe Choir serenading the parishioners



SFX kindergarten children performance



Have you ever experienced an epiphany? Perhaps after reading something difficult, suddenly everything becomes crystal clear? Or when we are faced with difficult life experiences like sickness, job loss, death or betrayal, do we question God? "Why me? ... Haven't I followed your ways, and commandments all my life? ... What else do you want of me?" The mystery of suffering certainly challenges us to think and reflect deeper on why we seem to be struck with such misfortune.

Just like Zechariah and Elizabeth who "were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly." They had been praying for a child, but Elizabeth was not able to conceive. But, in the Lord's time, their prayer was answered, not because the couple had observed the Lord's command and decrees, but rather, it was in his Plans. He certainly had a plan in his mind and only in his own perfect time, he will reveal himself.

Today, the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Epiphany. What does 'epiphany' mean? The Hebrew words for 'Epiphany' (Galah Shekinah), is to reveal the Presence of God to the world – a Divine Revelation of Jesus Christ to the world. Similarly, throughout the history of ancient Israel, the People of God were waiting for the Promise of the Messiah to come, and he chose to reveal himself to us in his Appointed and Perfect Time... a total of forty-two generations from Abraham to the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:1-17).

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in his first encyclical, Deus Caritas est, "God is Love" wrote that "being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person which gives life a new horizon and decisive direction." When we speak of the Divine Revelation, we are reminded of the encounter of the Divine Person, Jesus Christ, who is the revelation of the Father. And when we speak of an encounter, many would think of a mystical or an explicit encounter with God. But our encounter with God may not necessarily be a mystical or explicit one. Karl Rahner, a German Jesuit theologian, who was influential in the Second Vatican Council, insists that our encounter with God can be very deeply human too.

"being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person which gives life a new horizon and decisive direction."

- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

God can be experienced, albeit often unknowingly, in ordinary life. Rahner believes that the easiest "place" to notice this is in the depth or liminal experiences, where human beings are confronted with their own limitations, finitude or strength. Thus, for Rahner, the first way that humans experience God is simply through the mystery of who they are. Fundamentally, for us to encounter God in our daily life, we have to first be open, be attentive and be aware of his Presence. Our epiphany can be experienced through our ordinary daily life.

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.

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