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**Disciples  
Making Disciples**

## The Search for Eternal Peace

20<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time  
18 Aug 2019

**Jer 38:4-6, 8-10**  
**Hebr 12:1-4**  
**Lk 12:49-53**

When was the last time we experienced "peace"? Open any newspaper or switch to any news channel and we hear reports about numerous wars and political conflicts; "dark clouds on the horizon"; and the uncertain future ahead. While reports of political conflict unsettle our hearts, reports of economic uncertainty unsettle our minds. When we allow these troubles to set us ablaze, in place of zeal for God, we become distracted from *unity* with him – *the only thing necessary* (Lk 10:42). Indeed, our fixation with worldly concerns have often seen us fall into a state of perpetual uneasiness and inner discontent.

This has led many to lose faith in God; erroneously rationalising that the absence of peace in this world validates the absence of God. But what do we understand peace to be - what kind of peace do we long for? Is peace found in the absence of political conflict or perhaps the lack of material (ie financial) worries? Will we be at peace if we have enough savings in the bank, our material wants met, and if our children are successful? Desperate to alleviate the uncertainty in our lives and be "at peace" we often focus on financial and material solutions. We buy insurance, ensure we have sufficient savings,

make connections and contacts which might prove "useful" etc. Yet, despite all these measures, how many of us feel at peace? Family arguments are still fought over financial concerns and political differences, whilst sleep is still lost over the state of the world and our uncertain future.

In response to this question, the 15th century theologian, Denis the Carthusian, tells us that "**inner peace flows from love [and that] good, interior, spiritual peace consists in the repose of the mind in God**" (*On Luke's Gospel: Opera omnia XII, 72-74*). Additionally, St Teresa of Avila tells us that peace is given by the Lord "through His presence" and that "**Peaceful happiness of the will...differs from the happiness of the world**". To find peace, we must therefore seek to be "wholly united with God" through prayer (*Way of Perfection, Chapter 31*); bearing in mind that no amount of material comfort and/or certainty can bring true peace. Christ himself tells us to seek first the kingdom of God, that all other things will be given to us (Mt 6:33), for true peace can only come when we have our "*eyes fixed on Jesus*" (Hebr 12:2).

This is no easy task and like the Jews in the first reading, there will always be the temptation to take matters into our own hands, especially when it contradicts our own will and plan for ourselves. The first reading describes one such scenario: Jeremiah told the Jews to surrender to the Babylonians so that they could live in exile and wait for the promised restoration of God's people. Unable to live with such uncertainty and lacking God's peace, the Jewish leaders sought to take control of the situation themselves

by attempting to kill God's very own prophet. As a result of this disobedience, Jerusalem did not find a "resting place" (ie Peace), but saw her people enslaved (*Lamentations of Jeremiah*).

Considering this, the pre-baptismal anguish which Christ speaks of becomes more apparent. It is often difficult to surrender our own will and trust in God. Instead of having our minds repose in God through prayer, we allow the many worries of life to distract us from being in his presence. Though we desire peace, our obstinance often sees us finding it someplace else, while our pride prevents us from fully committing our lives to God. Like the Jews in the first reading, if our desire to be in God's presence is conditional and fleeting, we will never be able to find true peace through him, with him and in him (*Confessions, St Augustine*).

Reminded of this, let us allow ourselves to be temporally unsettled, as we abandoned the concerns of this world to bask in his presence; that through prayer we may be able to experience true and eternal peace from God.



*"Peaceful happiness of the will... differs from the happiness of the world" - St Teresa of Avila*

## Announcements

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

### SECOND COLLECTION FOR GIFT

**This weekend**, there will be a second collection for the GIFT (Giving in Faith & Thankfulness) campaign to build a more vibrant, evangelistic and missionary Church. GIRO forms, cheques or cash can be sealed into GIFT envelopes and dropped into the collection bags that will go around. Spare GIFT envelopes are available at the parish office. Please give generously for the vision of the archdiocese. More info is available at [gift.catholicfoundation.sg](http://gift.catholicfoundation.sg)

### COLUMBARIUM

Do note that the columbarium will not be open till phase one of the renovation project is completed. This is estimated to be in **mid-November**. This is for the safety of the public and all concerned. Thank you for your understanding.

### FAMILY LIFE SOCIETY: LOVE LIFE CONFERENCE

Understand the essentials of Life. Hear about the legal, medical and emotional aspects relating to the beginning of life, the options that all mothers have and the impact of abortion. Experts in the related field present and discuss Life.

**Date:** Fri 27 Sep

**Time:** 7.15pm - 9.45pm (Light dinner will be provided)

**Venue:** Lifelong Learning Institute, Lecture Theatre, Level 2 (11 Eunos Rd 8, S408601)

**Cost:** FOC (Love offerings are welcome)

**Register:** [bit.ly/llc\\_mail](http://bit.ly/llc_mail) or call 6488 0278 (Jacinta) for further enquiries

### THE CHANCERY: LOOKING FOR PROJECTS ASSISTANT

The Chancery is looking for a Projects Assistant (Contract). The job holder will assist the Project Manager with administrative and project requirements of the Chancery Office. Please refer to [www.catholic.sg/seek-opportunities/](http://www.catholic.sg/seek-opportunities/) for more details. **Application deadline is Fri 23 Aug.**

### NOTE ON FR JUDE'S POSTING

Fr Jude David who has been appointed Assistant Priest of the Church of St Francis Xavier is still on Study Leave. He will assist the parish when he is on his vacation in Singapore. Upon completion of his studies, he will assume the office of assistant priest at St Francis Xavier Parish as a secondary appointment besides teaching in the seminary. His primary appointment remains as Chaplain of the Office of Young People.

### SFX FUNDRAISING UPDATE

**\$1,476,306.00**

**\$2.3M Goal**



SFX has raised a total of cash & pledges amounting to **\$1,476,306.00** as of **July 2019**. The priests and Fundraising Committee appreciate everyone's efforts and thank all parishioners for their contributions in funds and participation in fundraising activities. **We look forward to your continued support as we work towards our \$2.3 million fundraising goal.**

### PARISH FORMATION PROGRAMME 2019: VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

To be fruitful in our mission, we need leaders with a vision, but how can we discern our vision together? Importantly, how can we as laity collaborate with our priests in our parish to fulfill God's mission for us? Come and learn more about what it takes to be visionary from Fr Jude on **Mon 26 Aug, 8 - 10pm** at the **Main Church**. All are welcome! Sign up now at <https://tinyurl.com/SFXModule4>

### 60TH ANNIVERSARY PARISH FEAST DAY DINNER: TICKET SALES!

Join us as we celebrate our 60th Feast Day as a parish community on **Sun 1 Dec, 7pm** at the **Ban Heng restaurant** (Harbourfront Centre #04-01, 1 Maritime Square S099253). Besides the sumptuous menu and entertainment, there will also be exciting games and a lucky draw! Look out for the ticket sales booth after mass and purchase your tickets early. Tickets cost **\$70 per person** and will be sold on a first come first served basis! **Renovation fundraiser tables are available at \$10,000 per table. For further details or to purchase a table, please contact the parish priest.**

### SAVE THE DATE: SFX CONVERSION EXPERIENCE RETREAT!

Have you wondered what it means to have a personal encounter with the Lord? Are you desiring healing in a certain area of your life? Do you yearn for more? SFX will be having our own stay-in conversion experience retreat (CER) from **6 - 10 Nov**, conducted by Archbishop William Goh at the Catholic Spirituality Center! Successful registration for CER will be determined by balloting. Applicants must be a 1st time retreatant and aged 21 years and above. **Forms are now available at the parish office and the main church, you can also download the form via [www.sfxchurch.sg/forms-and-admin](http://www.sfxchurch.sg/forms-and-admin).**

#### Ballot Registration Day at CSC:

**Date:** Sat 31 Aug (Registration - 9am)

**Time:** 9am - 1pm (Registration closes at 10am for balloting)

**Venue:** Catholic Spirituality Center (St Peter's Hall, Level 1)

### LANDINGS: WELCOMING RETURNING CATHOLICS

An evening of testimonies by Catholics who have returned and strengthened their faith with the help of Landings will be held on **Fri 23 Aug, 7.30pm** at the **JM Beurel Centre (Annex Building Level 3), Cathedral of the Good Shepherd ('A' Queen Street S188533)**. Listen to stories of struggles, challenges, grace and reconciliation and register via <https://bit.ly/2Dz549P>.

#### Details of next Landings programme at the Cathedral:

**Date:** Fridays from 13 Sep - 29 Nov

**Time:** 7.30pm - 9.30pm

**Venue:** Cathedral of the Good Shepherd

We invite Catholics seeking a reconnection with the Faith and those interested in this ministry to participate in this 10-week programme. **Registration closes on Sun 25 Aug.** Please email [returning@landings.org.sg](mailto:returning@landings.org.sg) or find out more at [www.landings.org.sg](http://www.landings.org.sg).

# Jesus Christ, my Redeemer

**CER testimony by Raphael Chia**



Life before these retreats was not good and I was very unhappy! I am a cradle Catholic, but I grew up not knowing my faith or who my godparents were. My parents often fought and quarreled. I have only vague memories attending Mass and accompanying my mum to Novena on some Saturdays. My father, if I recalled correctly, hardly attended Mass with us. I was not taught what a Bible is – I don't recall attending Sunday classes, and mum hardly spoke about Jesus and our faith.

The most difficult and bitter moment in my life was when my mum almost threw me out of our 4th storey kitchen window, naked, after I was caught stealing from a shop. I was about 7 years old then. Her action came as a shock to me and I was filled with fear. Yes, I was naughty and disobedient, but how could she be so angry to the extent of ending my life – her own son's life? This incident shaped my life for the worse. I became bitter, angry and extremely temperamental. I led life bitter and angry, not only with God, but with many other people. I recalled having a nasty, uncontrollable temper that got me into fights. I felt the whole world was against me. I conducted myself poorly and behaved badly. It did not help that my mum always compared me to my brother, who excelled in his studies, unlike me. For that, I hated her even more.

Even in the midst of these unhappiness, I was blessed to have Catholic friends who could tolerate and guide me. They introduced me to the Rosary and taught me to recite the Mysteries, hoping this could calm me. It helped for a while, but did not last long. I tried to read the Bible, but *wah...cheem!* I put it away almost immediately. And so, I continued my bitter life. Despite all this, I knew God was protecting me. Yet, I resisted His protection and did not pay attention to His love.

Before I attended CER59, I attended a retreat at SFX called the Road to Emmaus (RTE).

When I went into CER, I never thought I could forgive my mother and be healed of my deep-rooted anger. However, at both retreats – the RTE and CER – by the grace of God I surrendered to God totally, and had a very deep Sacrament of Reconciliation session. I recalled many deep-rooted sins and confessed all of them. It broke my hardened heart – I cried a lot despite not having cried for so many years! One of these deeply rooted sins was the unforgiveness that I held against my mother. Now, I can say I have truly forgiven her. Even though I still remember the incident, it is okay, because to forgive does not mean I need to forget. God showed me the value of Love and I knew my response had to be to spread His Love – first, to my mother. Besides forgiving her, I brought her to the adoration room – her first time in 80 years! – to spend quiet time with God who is Love.

I felt peaceful and calm when I rested in the Holy Spirit and I received the message of God's love for me and to be obedient to His calling. The RTE retreat initiated my conversion, and the CER completed it! PRAISE THE LORD! My personal encounters with Christ through these two retreats saved me! I received inner healing, love and regained my spiritual life and relationship with God.

After CER, while there's still temptations and sufferings, things are different now. I find renewed strength whenever I recall and share with others of God's love and the encounters I had with Him at the retreats. I am able to better manage my crosses through constant, consistent prayers, daily bible reflection, daily Masses and receiving of the Eucharist. I am a much better



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

Catholic now – praise the Lord! The CER has taught me to love others more unconditionally.

My fellow brothers and sisters in my communities noticed changes in me after the retreat. I am cheerful now, whereas before, I had a serious, angry-looking face. I am also growing more patient, kind and approachable towards others. I am thankful that together with my faith communities, I have grown in my prayer life and come to love intercessory prayers.

I thank God for his great mercy, for healing me both emotionally and spiritually!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, if you have not attended the CER, do not wait any longer – register early. You will not be disappointed. If you are still unsure and thinking, “to attend or not to attend?”, just go for it. What have you got to lose?

May our good Lord bless you and every one of us always.



### 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 except PH

### Opening Hours

#### PARISH OFFICE

**Mon - Fri:**  
9am - 9pm  
**Sat:** 9am - 7pm  
**Sun:** 8am - 1pm

#### ADORATION ROOM

Temporarily closed

#### LIBRARY

Temporarily closed

#### COLUMBARIUM

Temporarily closed

#### CANTEEN

Temporarily closed

### 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 check with the Parish Office.

### 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 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 and Church. Submit your envelopes at least two weeks in advance of your intended date. Please write the names clearly, and in block letters.



"Do you think I came to bring peace on earth?  
No, I tell you, but division."  
Luke 12:51

Y C Q U V P J U O W I N D P B  
W R D A U G H T E R F E I D X  
C O M C B B R T I M E I Q G F  
D W Q F D I V I D E D O R T B  
M D E A R T H L I D A X K E B  
K G E F K L C E U B S X Z C K  
S O E A F R S O U S O U T H I  
K S L M J A L M V H F X T U J  
Y L Y I W C T S E T O P Z C E  
F A X L H A P H J J O T N C A  
Z X Y Y X B P Q E G Q O A K I  
H X C F C A L F U R S E M N R  
D P W E S T X O E Q P I I M  
K B A P T I S M W G Y A T L W  
M O T H E R H G O S R W N F Q

WEST	HOT	CROWD	BAPTISM	CLOUD
TIME	PEACE	FATHER	RAIN	FIRE
WIND	SON	MOTHER	BLOWS	DAUGHTER
DIVIDED	SOUTH	SKY	EARTH	FAMILY

### VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

If you're interested in content curation and design layout, contact [mmm@sfxchurch.sg](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg)