



**Disciples
Making Disciples**



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Lost and Found! Rejoice and Serve!

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
15 Sep 2019

Ex 32:7-11. 13-14
1 Tim 1:12-17
Lk 15:1-32

The Pharisees and scribes in today's gospel persisted in seeing the "tax collectors and sinners" as outcasts and beyond redemption – even though they had gathered around Jesus in the hope that he could change their lives (cf Lk 15:1-2).

In response to their hardheartedness, Jesus relates three parables on divine mercy – a shepherd who leaves behind ninety-nine sheep in the wilderness to seek out one lost sheep, a woman who sweeps out her whole house in search of a lost coin and a father who throws a magnificent feast when his prodigal or lost son finally returns home. In explaining the rich symbolism in the shepherd, the woman and the father, 4th century Church Father and Doctor of the Church, St Ambrose said, "Who are these three persons: the shepherd, the woman, the father? Is not Christ the Shepherd, the Church the woman, and God the Father? Christ Who took upon Himself your sins bears you upon His own Body; the Church searches for you; the Father receives you back... First, mercy, second, intercession, third, reconciliation...the Redeemer comes to our aid, the Church intercedes for us, the Creator restores us to Himself." (*St Ambrose of Milan, Commentary on St Luke, ch.15*)



"Is not Christ the Shepherd, the Church the woman, and God the Father? Christ who took upon Himself your sins bears you upon His own Body; the Church searches for you; the Father receives you back"
– St Ambrose of Milan

As Church, we have been found by Christ our Good Shepherd and we must strive to remain in this safe place and conduct ourselves according to the new dignity we have been given, "We are His sheep; let us pray that He will place us amid the waters of His refreshment (Ps. 22:2)...let us seek of Him a place of pasture. We are pieces of silver; let us jealously cherish our value. We are children; let us hasten to our Father." (*ibid*)

Holy Mass, where we are fed with God's Word and the Eucharist, is our "place of pasture"; by God's adoption through the waters of baptism, we have become children of his kingdom and co-heirs with Christ (cf Rom 8:17).

Unless we persevere in being rooted in the mysteries of our faith, we can easily become lost again by leaving the way God has marked out for us and by fashioning a God on our own terms (cf Ex 32:8). The Pharisees and scribes fashioned a legalistic God and burdened the people with hundreds of religious obligations (cf Mt 23:4). In today's first reading, the Israelites made and worshipped a golden calf. This apostasy is very subtle as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI explained in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, "[the people were] completely attached to the same God...who led Israel out of Egypt... [but they] cannot cope with the

invisible, remote, and mysterious God... They want to bring him down into their own world, into what they can see and understand...[it is a] self-generated cult...a festival of self-affirmation" – it is devoid of any saving help.

The proper and perfect image of God's saving help can only be found in Christ and his cross. As St Paul firmly urged, "Here is a saying that you can rely on and nobody should doubt: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim 1:15) This mission of saving sinners has now been entrusted to us the church. At his Ascension, Christ instructed the church to go baptise all nations in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (cf Mt 28:19). We have the mission, as St Ambrose pointed out, to search out those who are lost and to intercede for their conversion and transformation.

In all three parables, Jesus tells us there is much rejoicing in heaven when a sinner who had been lost is found. Unlike the Pharisees and scribes, may we be filled with rejoicing when we see others try to transform their lives for Christ. May we also be zealous like St Paul to be called into Christ's service – becoming his messengers of reconciliation to those who are lost and waiting to be brought home to the Father's house.

Announcements

For announcements in the bulletin, send your requests to 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

CATHOLIC EDUCATION SUNDAY - SUN 15 SEP

Let us welcome students from CHIJ Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Gabriel's Primary School and St. Gabriel's Secondary School who will be joining us for this weekend masses to celebrate Catholic Education Sunday.

SPIRITUAL BOUQUETS FOR SFX CER

Our upcoming SFX CER in Nov is an excellent opportunity for us to live up to our charitable self. We have started a spiritual bouquet for all involved in the upcoming SFX CER. Spiritual bouquets are prayers or devotional acts that someone (the giver) has or will offer for someone else (the recipient). We will be offering rosary prayers and devotional acts of fasting as part of our spiritual bouquet. Booths will be set up during all weekend masses from **7 - 29 Sep**. Come and sign up to offer your spiritual support for the Retreatants, Archbishop William Goh, Priests & all Service Team!

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER, OCT - DEC WEEKENDS

"Marriage is a project to be worked on together ... and a process of growth." - Pope Francis (*Amoris Laetitia*, no. 218, 221).

Make your marriage a priority! Good marriages can always be made better. To deepen and refine your couple relationship, sign up for one of the coming Marriage Encounter Weekends.

Dates: 4 - 6 Oct, 1 - 3 Nov & 6 - 8 Dec.
Register: 9670 5390 (David & Clara) or email at mewkend@gmail.com

PARISH FORMATION PROGRAMME 2019: COMMUNITY - CHRIST'S WAY OF DISCIPLESHIP

Walking as a disciple of Jesus Christ can be difficult, and we feel it even more when we try to walk this road of discipleship alone. Jesus knows that this path is not easy, and thus he calls us to walk with our fellow brothers and sisters in community. He called a community of twelve men to be his first disciples, and these disciples went on to form more communities wherever they proclaimed God's word. Come listen to Mike Arents, as he shares why community is Christ's way of discipleship as well as his personal experiences journeying with a community.

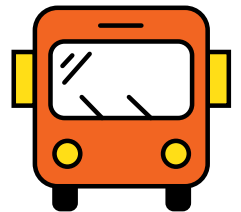
Date: Mon 16 Sep
Time: 8pm - 10pm
Venue: SFX Main Church

PARISH FORMATION PROGRAMME 2019: MINISTRY & MISSION

Have you ever felt a stirring in your heart towards a greater mission? Sometimes as we grow comfortable serving in the parish ministry we are serving in, we lose the sense of the greater call. Are lectors just called to read? Are wardens merely called to direct traffic? Are choirs just called to sing? The Lord has great dreams for us and calls us to be vessels in building his kingdom - He calls us to a deeper mission, a deeper calling. Come and discover the deeper calling and mission in your ministry with Mike Arents on **Mon 23 Sep, 8 - 10pm** at the **Main Church**. All are welcome!

60TH ANNIVERSARY FEAST DAY DINNER: ONE-WAY BUS TICKETS SALE & PRIZES APPEAL

There are 15 dinner tickets left and limited one-way bus tickets for sale. Tickets cost \$70 per person, it will be on a first come first served basis! **Bus pick up in front of Church foyer and departs at 6.15pm sharp on Sun 1 Dec.** We would like to appeal for your generosity for donations for lucky draw prizes - new electronic items or gifts vouchers are welcome. Please contact Patrick at 9616 6663 if you would like to purchase tickets or contribute to the lucky draw prizes.



OYP: TREASURE 11 (YOUNG ADULTS ENCOUNTER RETREAT)

"We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." - 2 Cor 4:7

Do you believe that God has the power to bring about Hope and New Life despite the circumstances you are in? Are the treasures of the world unable to satisfy your soul? We invite you to come and discover the Treasure that He offers you!

OYP's Catholic stay-in encounter retreat for young working adults, Treasure 11, is now open for registration. It will be held from **Fri 25 Oct, 8pm - Mon 28 Oct, 6pm** at \$130 per person. (No taking of annual leave required as 28 Oct is a public holiday.)

Come as you are!
Register here: oyp.org.sg/treasure11

TREASURE 11
YOUNG ADULTS ENCOUNTER RETREAT 2019

25 OCT (FRI) 8PM
to 28 OCT (MON) 6PM

21-35 YEARS OLD | \$130
OFFICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

2 LOR LOW KOON 5536449
SIGN UP @ OYP.ORG.SG/TREASURE11

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." - 2 Cor 4:7

Catholic Education Sunday: What is Our Role in Preserving Catholic Education?



The Archdiocese has designated 15 Sep 2019 as Catholic Education Sunday. The aim of Catholic Education Sunday (CES) is to underscore the importance of School-Church-Home partnerships in delivering a unique Catholic education where Christ is the centre of all we do. The theme of Catholic Education Sunday 2019 is "Many Gifts, One Mission".

There is a fear these days that Catholic schools are 'not Catholic enough'. But do not misinterpret this to mean that non-Catholic students should not be studying in Catholic schools. All are welcome to learn together with our Catholic children, to imbibe the values taught in our mission schools, and in the process, to evangelise and grow them in the Catholic faith.

But what is Catholic education in Catholic or mission schools and what does it mean by 'not Catholic enough'?

During a meeting with Catholic educators in August on issues relating to Catholic education, Archbishop William Goh explained that to be truly Catholic, our schools must be Catholic not just in identity but in their self-understanding. By this, he meant that Catholic education must be inspired by the Gospel, faith in God, and our dignity as God's children to share in the life of God eternally. He said that promoting human dignity is the first principle underpinning a Catholic education which contributes to an evangelising Church by announcing that we are children of God, our true identity and our heavenly calling. He added that students must be passionate in pursuing truth, goodness, love and beauty, and they must grow to be a beacon for others by serving God and humanity, and living a life that is purposeful, meaningful and fruitful.

What is alarming, as raised by Archbishop Goh, is that the growing secularisation in our society causes the

absence of the Sacred in public life, the loss of contact with the presence of God which leads to a loss of faith and despair about the meaning of life and the future of humanity. He said that the consequence of this is that our young people are embracing the relativistic, individualistic and materialistic values of the world, taking their directions and values in life from social media and the internet rather than from the Gospel which speaks of integrity, truth, charity, selfless service and a clear hope for eternal life with God.

PRAYER FOR OUR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS **COMPOSED BY HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP WILLIAM GOH**

Heavenly Father, you formed us in your image and likeness, to give you glory. Bless our Catholic schools, that they may raise gracious men and women of integrity and compassion.

Jesus, you enlightened, inspired and taught with authority. Guide our teachers whom you have entrusted with this vocation of formation. Grant them love, wisdom and patience, and strengthen them in their struggles.

Pour forth your Holy Spirit to empower all teachers to nurture their students to their fullest potential, to be the unique individuals that you have created them to be. May all students be docile to formation, imbibe knowledge and values and use their gifts for the service of humanity.

Through the intercession of our Blessed Mother and all patron saints, may our Catholic schools flourish to be sanctuaries for all students to thrive and learn in harmony, growing in full measure to be the salt and light of the world.


(continued on Pg 4)

Archbishop Goh is calling on us to respond to the challenge in preserving our Catholic identity in Catholic and mission schools. One of the challenges faced by Catholic or mission schools is the dwindling number of Religious Brothers and Sisters. Many of their roles are gradually being handed over to the lay community. To add to this community, he calls on Catholic teachers to join Catholic schools so that good and right values can be passed on. He also welcomes Catholics and alumni students who have a passion and calling to volunteer themselves in Catholic schools.

To parents, he admonishes parents to ensure that their children are given a proper foundation in Catholic education. Parents are reminded that education is not just acquiring academic knowledge, but should be more holistic so that our young people would be formed with the desire to excel in every aspect of their intellectual, human, moral and spiritual formation in order to find meaning and purpose in life, and to grow their faith in God. (Source: The Catholic News)

Call to Action

Fan into a flame the gift that God gave you.
-2 Timothy 1:6



ALL CATHOLICS & ALUMNI

- Pray for our schools
- Share your experience as a school volunteer
- Share your Catholic education stories
- Spread the word about Catholic education within the community and beyond

01

PARENTS & STUDENTS

- Choose Catholic schools
- Be involved as a parent volunteer
- Serve in student ministries
- Grow as a Catholic family as part of the school's faith community

02

EDUCATORS

- Demonstrate love and compassion through pastoral guidance
- Live out Catholic values in daily teaching and learning
- Serve in Catholic school activities
- Share about the faith among colleagues

03

Follow us on

Do you feel called to find out more? Do you feel moved to step up as a volunteer?

Visit school websites

Get in touch with schools to volunteer

Learn more about Catholic education at <http://accs.sg/> and <http://schools.catholic.sg>



Looking for more Information?
visit www.sfxchurch.sg!

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

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 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

To celebrate CES this weekend, students from CHIJ Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Gabriel's Primary School and St. Gabriel's Secondary School will serve in some of the masses as lectors, hospitality ministers or in a joint choir and/or altar servers. For more information, do follow the catholicschools.sg Instagram page or the Archdiocesan Commission for Catholic Schools (ACCS) Facebook.