



Disciples
Making Disciples



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Faith and Tree Climbing

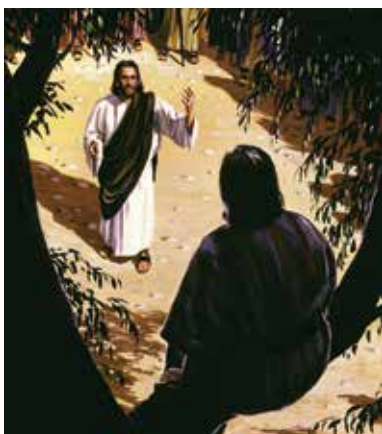
31st Sunday in Ordinary Time
3 Nov 2019

Wis 11:22-12:2
2 Th 1:11-2:2
Lk 19:1-10

Today's readings are all about God's love for us and how that love transforms our lives and frees us from sin. But in order for this to happen, we first have to respond to his love, by actively seeking and accepting it. It is a simple message, evident in all the readings, but with profound implications for how to achieve a deeper relationship with God.

The first reading is part of a beautiful poem written less than 50 years before Jesus' time on earth and speaks of God's relationship with man:

"In your sight, Lord, the whole world is like a grain of dust that tips the scales, like a drop of morning dew falling on the ground. Yet you are merciful to all, because you can do all things and overlook men's sins so that they can repent. Yes you love all that exist, you hold nothing of what you have made in abhorrence..."
(Wis 11:22-24)



"We do not need to climb trees to encounter God, but we must be as proactive as Zacchaeus in seeking him, and when we do, our Lord never holds back in affirming, encouraging and loving us."

God, the creator of the universe, is all-powerful, and we are but a tiny part of his creation. But this does not diminish his love for us. It is a love that understands our nature completely, especially our wayward ways, and is all merciful. He seeks us so that we can respond to his love and repent of our sins.

The Gospel reading continues this message in a delightful story about Zacchaeus, a tax collector who wanted to take a look at Jesus passing by in the town of Jericho. He was a short man and the only way he could do so was to climb a sycamore tree. To his surprise and the utter amazement of everyone present, Jesus called out to him, "Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry because I must stay at your house today." (Lk 19:5) The crowd was stunned because tax collectors were despised by Jews as they worked for the Roman rulers and were generally considered dishonest.

Why did Jesus call out to him, and what does this say about God's love and mercy?

God is omniscient. He knew that Zacchaeus was ready to accept his love and mercy, and to repent and change his life to one of service to God. But Zacchaeus also had to make the move to seek out God, which he did by going out of his way by climbing a tree, possibly

exposing himself to ridicule and embarrassment.

A deeply personal encounter with our Lord always brings profound joy. And so when Jesus affirmed Zacchaeus' enthusiastic response by wanting to stay in his house, Zacchaeus was filled with such intense gratitude that he promised to give away half of his possessions to the poor and pledged to repay four times those that he had overcharged (cf Lk 19:8).

We do not need to climb trees to encounter God, but we must be as proactive as Zacchaeus in seeking him, and when we do, our Lord never holds back in affirming, encouraging and loving us.

It was God's gift of faith which made Zacchaeus approach Jesus and it is our response to faith which will make us do likewise. As stated in CCC 26, "Faith is man's response to God, who reveals and gives himself to man, at the same time bringing man a superabundant light as he searches for the ultimate meaning of his life."

We are told throughout Scripture that God seeks out especially repentant sinners, and everyone who turns to him in faith can be saved, even the most sinful. St Paul's letter to the Thessalonians in today's second reading affirms the importance of faith. Addressing their anxiety over what they thought was the imminent Second Coming of Christ, St Paul tells them not to be overly excited and that their active and living faith evidenced by their "desires for goodness" (2 Th 1:11) will be rewarded.

We too should take comfort in this, that as long as we keep faith, and seek God's love and grace in our everyday lives, we do not need to worry about when the end might come. Just as in Zacchaeus' case, the Lord will seek us.

Announcements

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

PARISH HOLY HOUR AT CSC

Parish Holy Hour will be on **Thu 7 Nov, 8pm** at the **Catholic Spirituality Centre (1261 Upper Serangoon Road S534796)**. Join us as we pray for our fellow brothers and sisters-in-Christ who are attending the SFX Conversion Experience Retreat.

LOURDES EXPERIENCE 2019 - TICKETS COLLECTION

The Lourdes Experience 2019 will take place on **Sat 7 Dec** from **2pm - 9.30pm** at the Singapore Indoor Stadium. Admission is by ticket only. For those who are interested, please collect tickets from the Parish Office on these two days only: **Sat 2 Nov from 10am to 5pm** and **Sun 3 Nov from 9am to 12 noon**. **Each adult is entitled to two tickets and tickets are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.** Please make your own transport arrangements. Due to limited tickets, no reservation of tickets is allowed. For wheelchair-bound parishioners who wish to attend, please download the form at www.sfxchurch.sg/lourdes-experience-2019 and email the completed forms directly to LourdesExperienceSG@gmail.com. For more information, please visit orderofmaltasingapore.org.

CHOICE WEEKEND

It takes that one weekend to inspire you for the rest of your life. Come away for a Choice Weekend - for it is by the choices we make where we define what our life is all about.

Date: Fri 29 Nov, evening - Sun 1 Dec, evening
Venue: Choice Retreat House (47 Jurong West Street 42 S649368)
Cost: \$90 per pax
Register: www.choice.org.sg/?page_id=8 or call 9876 3214 (Celia)

— TRIDUUM & FEAST DAY 2019 —

THANKSGIVING

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

24 NOV (SUN)

MASS FOR THE ELDERLY & SICK WITH ANOINTING
Confession 1.15PM. Mass and Anointing 2PM
Forms available at Parish Office. Registration closes 10 Nov

Celebrant: Fr Benjamin Eishu (Myanmar)

<p>28 NOV (THU)</p> <p>REMEMBERING the Mission</p> <p>TRIDUUM MASS 8PM</p>	<p>29 NOV (FRI)</p> <p>SEEKING God's Help</p> <p>TRIDUUM MASS 8PM</p>	<p>30 NOV (SAT)</p> <p>SHARING the Mission</p> <p>TRIDUUM MASS 5.30PM</p>
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1 DEC (SUN) FEAST DAY

REBUILD MY CHURCH, RESTORE MY PEOPLE
11AM* FEAST DAY MASS, with His Grace Archbishop William Goh
7AM, 9AM, 5PM* SUNDAY MASS
**Please kindly note the change in mass timing *Blessing of Leaders at 11am mass*

MASS FOR THE ELDERLY & SICK WITH ANOINTING

In conjunction with our Parish Feast Day, we invite the elderly and sick to this special mass with the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, to experience the "special grace on the Christian experiencing the difficulties inherent in the condition of grave illness or old age" (CCC 1527). **Mass will be on Sun 24 Nov from 2pm - 4pm.** There will also be **confession from 1.15pm**. Family and friends are welcome to join in this special Eucharistic Celebration as we give support to them as a loving and prayerful community. A registration booth will be set up during all weekend masses this weekend. Sign up at tinyurl.com/MFTS2019.



Volunteers Needed!

Volunteers are needed to provide transportation to and from our church, as well as ushering and serving refreshments after mass. If you are interested, please register at tinyurl.com/MFTSvolunteers2019 by **Sun 10 Nov**.

CATECHISM REGISTRATION FOR 2020

The registration for Nursery Level (children aged 4 years old in 2020) will be on the following dates: **Sun 27 Oct, 3 and 10 Nov**, from **9.30am - 11am**. Parents are to download the registration form from the SFX website and submit a copy of their child's baptism certificate (with the completed forms) to the Parish Office. Forms are also available at the Parish Office. Spaces are limited, so do not delay.

Due to the church renovations, catechism for 2020 will still be held in CHIJ - Our Lady of Good Counsel and the timings remain unchanged:

Nursery to P4 (L4): 1.30pm - 3pm
P5 (L5) to P6 (L6): 3.15pm - 4.45pm
S1 (L7) to S3 (L9): 3.15pm - 5pm

For any other enquiries, please email catechism@sfxchurch.sg.

SFX FUNDRAISING UPDATE

\$1,835,706.00



\$2.3M Goal

SFX has raised a total of cash and pledges amounting to **\$1,835,706.00** as of **Sep 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.**

FAMILY LIFE SOCIETY: KISS MISS BLISS

This programme/event is targeted at newly married couples who are into their first five years of married life. The title, Kiss Miss Bliss, is a casual reference to the three phases of a couple's marital journey – courtship (KISS), challenges in married life (MISS) and the golden years of stability and endurance (BLISS) of their marriage. In this session, we aim to impress upon couples that a loving, lasting and BLISSful married life is not without the many challenges (ie: MISSes) they have to first learn to address, endure and overcome jointly.

Date: Thu 14 Nov
Time: 7pm - 9.30pm
Venue: CANA, Level 3 (55 Waterloo Street S187954)
Cost: \$20 per pax

LIVING UNTIL WE DIE: THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF THE LAST ACT OF THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

This retreat focuses on the invitations for life's final stage. It attempts to respond to questions like: What is retirement for? How can I grow old well? What is the meaning of my life at this time? What fears am I facing as I ponder the end of my life? How do I open myself to the joy that this stage of life is offering me? What is the intimacy of old age? What provision do I need for the onward journey? This retreat is conducted by Sr Linda Lizada, recommended for brothers and sisters in Christ aged 60 years and above.

Date & Time: Fri 22 Nov, 8pm - Sun 24 Nov, 1pm
Venue: Montfort Centre (622 Upper Bukit Timah Rd S678117)
Contribution: \$300
Register: www.cenaclemission.com

CARITAS SINGAPORE: WALKING TOGETHER 2019

This is Caritas Singapore's inaugural walk for charity! Through this walk, it aims to raise funds to support the work of the Caritas Singapore Family comprising 27 charities and social mission organisations. Your donation will go a long way to support its work in the community. This will cover a wide array of causes such as journeying with the poor, families and children, youth, the elderly, persons with mental issues, disabilities or special needs, persons with illnesses, the incarcerated and migrants. Register now, and walk for a good cause!

Date: Sat 23 Nov
Time: 8am - 12 noon
Venue: Agape Village (7A Lorong 8 Toa Payoh S319264)
Register: bit.ly/WalkingTogether2019



**HOLY FATHER'S
PRAYER INTENTIONS
THIS MONTH**

**UNIVERSAL - COMMUNICATION
AND RECONCILIATION**

That a spirit of dialogue, encounter and reconciliation emerges in the Near East, where diverse religious communities share their lives together

IN THE MONTH OF OCT 2019

BAPTISMS

We welcome:

1. Noelle Raksha d/o Christopher John
2. Catherine Lee Tee Beng

CONDOLENCES

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

1. Kee Rosalie @ Cecilia Kee
2. T. Francics
3. Koh Peck Nui Julie
4. Caleb Ong
5. Chng Mathew
6. Wong Yoke Lin @ Mrs. Janet Ooi
7. Peter Tan Chin Kiat

HOLY INNOCENTS' HIGH SCHOOL - OPEN HOUSE

Holy Innocents' High School would like to invite P6 students and their parents to visit the School during our upcoming Open House. Come have a taste of student life at a Diocesan School where our students learn to have the courage to lead and the compassion to serve through an interesting school curriculum that includes interesting CCAs and programmes. The details are as follows:

Date: Sat 9 Nov
Time: 9am - 1pm
Venue: Holy Innocents' High School (1191 Upper Serangoon Road, S534786)

2020 MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE

Willing to put in the time and effort to work for a marriage that will last a lifetime? For programme details and application forms, please visit www.catholic.org.sg/mpc or contact Karen at 9170 0143.

2020 Courses:

16 Feb - 22 Mar 2020
 19 Apr - 31 May 2020
 5 Jul - 16 Aug 2020
 20 Sep - 25 Oct 2020

Overcoming Grief and Suffering

A talented painter once gave an unforgettable performance in front of an admiring audience. With rapid strokes of his brush, he painted a beautiful country scene and a friendly blue sky punctuated with soft, white clouds. As he stepped back from his easel, the audience burst into applause — only to be silenced by the artist, who announced, “The picture is not complete.”

He turned and began covering the canvas with dark, sombre paints, replacing the peaceful country scene with blotches of morose, unappealing colours. “Now,” he asserted, “the picture is finished, and it is perfect.” The audience looked on in disbelief. Then the painter turned the canvas on its side, and they then saw a stunningly beautiful, dark waterfall, cascading over moss-covered rocks and creating a rich symphony of colour.

The artist intended his amazing and unexpected demonstration to be a reflection on the reality of sorrow: one beautiful scene of life was transformed into another, even as observers believed something wonderful was forever lost.

Similarly, God is the artist who created our lives, and desires to make them into something permanent and glorious; and sorrow and loss are often his instruments in bringing about this change. From our limited perspective, we believe that the original picture is fine and good, and that any change, especially a painful one, can only be for the worse. The Lord, however, sees and understands the possibilities of life and eternity far more completely than we ever will, and if we trust in him, he is able to use all the good and sombre events and experiences of our lives and bring about something of lasting and unequalled beauty.

Grief over any serious loss — especially the death of a loved one — is a heavy cross to bear. Sorrow is often unavoidable, but our response of faith and hope in eternal life can bring us a measure of peace. God knows everything we feel and no tear is unnoticed. As St Pio once said to a grieving person, “Your tears were collected by the angels and were placed in a gold chalice, and you will find them when you present yourself before God.” The saints assure us that turning to the Lord in our sorrows and placing our hopes in him can give us strength and help prepare us for a future of new life and joy.

Three useful ways Catholics can deal with suffering and grief

1 Moving from the question, “why me,” ask, “why not me?”

When we are suffering, it is natural to ask “why me.” But there is another question we have to ask alongside it, “why not me?” Jesus suffered too, and his suffering led to the conquering of sin and death for us. He is our salvation, our hope and our model for how we can suffer. When we are in the right frame of mind, our suffering can build us up into someone stronger.

2 Being open to seeing where God is present

While God does not rejoice in our suffering, he is always present in it and never lets anything evil go unchallenged. God gives us strength to deal with whatever comes our way, but also works within the circumstances to make something better come out of it. We are given new strength, a deeper, richer faith, and closeness in relationships that would not have otherwise happened and more.

3 Sitting with others in their pain and being Christ's presence to them

When we have been deeply affected by a time of suffering or grief, we are changed in ways that make us see ourselves and the world around us differently. When we find healing in those circumstances, we grow to be sensitive and empathetic to others who are struggling. Sitting with others in their pain can help them because we have been there ourselves.

“You will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy... I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.”
- John 16:20

Article adapted from: “The Saints and Overcoming Grief” by Fr Joseph M. Esper and “5 Useful Ways Catholics Can Deal With Suffering and Grief” by Jen Schlameuss-Perry.



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 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

ANOIDTING 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.



VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

If you're interested in content curation and design layout, contact mmm@sfxchurch.sg