





**Disciples
Making Disciples**

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Responding to an Epiphany

Solemnity of the
Epiphany of the Lord
5 Jan 2020

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

The account of the three wise men from the East who saw a brilliant star heralding the birth of Jesus Christ and followed it in search of the infant Messiah is one of the best known Christmas stories. St Matthew narrates it succinctly and plainly. Or so it seems. For there is much to reflect on in his seemingly matter-of-fact re-telling of one of the most significant encounters between God and man. It has to be! What can be more important and meaningful than understanding the events leading to one of the Incarnate Word's first meetings with mankind and how they responded to his appearance!

Examining this through the different characters in the story, we can first look at King Herod, the much feared and ruthless ruler of Judea who, on hearing about the birth of Christ, immediately summoned his chief priests and scribes to find out what they knew and where he would be born. They told him: "In Bethlehem in Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, you are by no means least among the leaders of Judah, for out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel.'" (Mt 2:6)

Their response is telling. They knew what the prophets had said for they were learned in the scriptures,



But this is precisely what faith is. It is a mystery, yet it is also simple and powerful. When one has faith, God's providential and saving plan is clear and obvious, as it was with the three wise men.

yet, even with all that knowledge, when confronted with visible signs of the Messiah's coming, they had seemed indifferent and continued to serve the king blindly. What does this show? It shows that head knowledge is pointless if it is not accompanied by wisdom, honesty and, most importantly, faith. All the learned scholars which King Herod summoned could not make him see how the world around him was about to change.

Ability and power, when removed from the divine, accounts for much of human folly and suffering. King Herod was all-powerful but his power blinded him to the ways of the Lord.

In contrast, the response of the three wise men tells a completely different story. On seeing the rising star, they immediately knew what it represented and set forth to follow it in order to pay homage to the infant Christ: "The sight of the star filled them with delight, and going into the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage." (Mt 2:10-12)

Their response showed how single-minded they were in their pursuit of the rising star. When they finally arrived at the house they did not stop to enquire from Mary the circumstances of the birth or to satisfy themselves that this was indeed the Holy One.

Instead, on seeing the child, they immediately fell on their knees. Why was their behavior so different from King Herod and his men, especially since they were not even Jews?

It is not easy to explain and the reading does not offer a reason.

But this is precisely what faith is. It is a mystery, yet it is also simple and powerful. When one has faith, God's providential and saving plan is clear and obvious, as it was with the three wise men. The second reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians reinforces this point about how God reveals himself to those who have welcomed his gift of faith, "You have probably heard how I have been entrusted by God with the grace he meant for you, and that it was by a revelation that I was given the knowledge of the mystery. This mystery that has now been revealed through the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets was unknown to any men in past generations; it means that pagans now share the same inheritance..." (Eph 3:2-3)

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI says the Holy Eucharist is a continuous epiphany of Christ (cf Homily, 6 Jan 2009). Today's readings invite us to consider our response to this amazing epiphany as we are joined to Christ and to each other in Holy Communion.

Announcements

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

2ND COLLECTION FOR SSVF

This weekend, there will be a second collection by Society of St Vincent De Paul to help the poor and needy in monthly rations and other aid programmes. Please give generously.

WRITING CHEQUES FOR CHURCH

For those who write cheques for church, a gentle reminder that the payee is as follows:

- 1. GENERAL DONATION:**
CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS
XAVIER
- 2. RENOVATION FUND:**
CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS
XAVIER (RESTRICTED)

For any enquires, please contact **6285 2062 (Grace - Finance)**

CANA: RAISE THE PRAISE

Let's get together to RAISE THE PRAISE to our God who will lead us into the new year. Join Fr Kamelus Kamus CICM, Fr Edward Lim OCD, Fr Derrick Yap OFM as well as renowned musicians and composers Jesse Manibusan and ValLimar Jansen for an evening of music and song.

Dates: Fri 10 Jan 2020 (*Church of St Bernadette*) or Sat 11 Jan 2020 (*Church of St Ignatius*)

Time: 7.45pm (doors open 7.30pm)

Contribution: \$25

Contact: canaevents2019@gmail.com or call 6338 4080/6906 8447/9176 8909

ACMI SKILLS DEVELOPMENT FOR FOREIGN DOMESTIC WORKERS AT AGAPE VILLAGE

Last chance to register for English Language, Haircutting, Cooking, Computer and Guitar. Download the course schedule at bit.ly/33hi2Tv. To register, call 8600 3583 (Jan/Theresa) or visit **Agape Village** (Level 3 on 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12 Jan from 10am - 5pm). **Registration will close on 12 Jan!**

NO ACCESS TO COLUMBARIUM

As we have not obtained the Temporary Occupation Permit, our columbarium remains closed until end January 2020. For safety reasons, nobody should enter the columbarium and the construction site, unless authorised. The Church will not be responsible for injuries sustained arising from unauthorised entry. We seek your cooperation and thank you for your understanding and patience.

RENOVATION UPDATE: CHANGE IN MASS VENUE AND TIMING

The Main Church will be handed over to the contractors for renovation work on **Mon 6 Jan 2020**. In the interim, from **11 Jan - 1 Mar**, weekday masses will be held on the second level of the Parish Centre, while weekend masses will be held at CHIJ - Our Lady of Good Counsel (OLGC) school hall.

WEEKDAY MASSES (CHANGE IN VENUE)

Venue: St Matthew, St Mark and St Luke rooms (Parish Centre, Level 2)

Time: 6.30am, 6.30pm

WEEKEND MASSES (CHANGES IN TIMINGS AND VENUE)

Venue: OLG School Hall (2C Burghley Dr, Singapore 558979)

Time: Sat: 5.30pm (Novena at 4.45pm)

Sun: 7am, 9am, **11.30am (instead of 11am)**

There will be **no 5.30pm mass on Sunday** to facilitate timely hand over of the school hall.

Parking

Drop-offs are allowed but **there will be no parking within the school premises**. All cars should be parked in SFX Church car park only. Due to limited parking lots in OLG, it will be strictly reserved for self-driven handicapped driver and cars with handicap labels.

ANAWIM

The next session will be on **Tue 7 Jan at 8pm in SFX Room (Parish Centre, level 2)**. 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.

CENACLE SISTERS: AT HOME RETREAT

Journey from Ashes to Easter - a 10-week programme based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola to know Jesus more intimately in the midst of life's daily routine. It is a school of prayer and a Lenten preparation for Easter. Includes weekly meeting of faith sharing, daily prayer with Scripture and one spiritual direction by Cenacle Sisters & Team. **Contribution:** \$250.00

MORNINGS:

Date: 20 Feb - 23 Apr (Thurs)

Time: 9.30am - 11.30am

Venue: LaSalle Centre - St. Patrick's School (490 East Coast Road)

or

EVENINGS:

Date: 20 Feb - 23 Apr (Thurs)

Time: 7.30pm - 9.30pm

Venue: Cana - the Catholic Centre (55 Waterloo St)

CJC OPEN HOUSE 2020

Calling all students who have sat for their 2019 O-Level exams! Visit CJC during the Open House 2020 in mid Jan, the day after the release of the O-Level results. This is an opportunity for students to find out more about the college and the programmes and activities offered. CJC's holistic education is to develop "Thinkers with a Mission, Leaders with a Heart (TMLH)" and encourage students to continue their post-secondary education in a Catholic mission junior college.

Date: The day after the release of the O-Level Results
Time: 10am - 4pm
Venue: 129 Whitley Road S297822



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

EVANGELISATION - PROMOTION OF WORLD PEACE

We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

IN THE MONTH OF DEC 2019

CONDOLENCES

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

1. Matthew Shen Kai En
2. Chan Yook Ying Theresa
3. Teresa Tan Siak Lang
4. Maryann Tan Lee Eng

BAPTISMS

We welcome:

1. Yap Hui Ting Tessa
2. Joshua Foo Shi Kai
3. Zack Augustine Choa Yu Zhe
4. Dominic Luke Ambrose
5. Elise Jing-En Tveit

Making New Year's Resolutions - Tips and no Tricks

As we look into the new year, inevitably the question of resolutions will be on many of our minds. Whether we make or do not make them, there is always a sense of resoluteness and hope that this year will be different; that we will be fitter, lose some weight, put on some weight, be tidier or more organised, pray more etc.

Fr Luke Fong in his blog entry dated 30 Dec (frlukefong.blogspot.com) had this to recommend, "an approach towards this task of making new year's resolutions which is far easier, and what's most truly amazing...is that if you do this, and stick to this with great effort. there is really a guarantee that your entire life will be lived in a way that not only will do you tremendous good, but it will also make a positive difference to the world."

Fr Fong uses this picture (right) which sums up what this approach is:

To help us move towards this goal of loving God, we would like to repeat some tips gleaned from catholic.sg on how to grow spiritually in the new year.



1. ASK QUESTIONS

These questions can help us to take stock of our lives and set some personal goals:

- *How has my relationship with Jesus been, over the past year?*
- *Did I go to Confession and Mass regularly?*
- *How have I shared Christ's light with others?*
- *How did I serve the Church with the gifts God has granted me?*
- *Which sins or vices drag me down the most?*

2. GIVE YOURSELF SOME QUIET TIME TO DISCERN YOUR CALLING.

Spend quiet moments in adoration or a quiet place to speak and pray to our Lord, asking for understanding and wisdom.

3. SET REALISTIC GOALS

Assess other demands on your time and energy and break your spiritual goals into small, tangible steps. A moderate goal (e.g. "ten minutes of prayer on the bus") is more achievable than an ambitious "one hour of Eucharistic adoration daily".

4. SEEK ACCOUNTABILITY

"Two are better than one, for if they fall, one will lift up his fellow." (Ecc 4:9-10) And so it is when one seeks to adopt new habits. An accountability partner - someone whom you trust to be honest and encouraging - can help ensure that your spiritual goals remain on track. And a shared goal (e.g. studying scripture together) can bond people in friendship while bringing each of them closer to God.

Accountability is even more important when seeking to break bad or sinful habits. The embarrassment of having to check in with someone who has promised to hold you accountable may help you to strengthen your resolve against sin.

Living a Godly life will not shield us from the stresses of everyday events or guarantee happiness. However, it will bring peace - a peace the world cannot give (Jn 14:27) - and a sense of purpose, as we know that we are preparing our hearts for the Lord's return in glory.

(Adapted from frlukefong.blogspot.com and catholic.sg)



Mass Timings

Opening Hours

WEEKEND MASSES

Sat Sunset:
5.30pm (Novena at 4.45pm)
Sun: 7am, 9am, 11am & 5.30pm
Confession 15 mins before Sunday Mass

PARISH OFFICE

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

ADORATION ROOM

Temporarily closed

WEEKDAY MASSES

Mon - Fri:
6.30am & 6.30pm
Sat: 6.30am

LIBRARY

Temporarily closed

MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

8.30am *only*

COLUMBARIUM
Temporarily closed

CANTEEN

Temporarily closed

HOLY HOUR

8.30pm, every first Thurs of the month except PH

The Solemnity of the Epiphany (with the word "Epiphany" meaning a "manifestation", "showing forth" or "revelation") celebrates the manifestation of our Lord to the whole world. This Feast celebrates both the wise men's (the Magi's) visit to Jesus shortly after his birth and also Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist.

In our Christian tradition, the Magi represents the first Gentiles; therefore as they search for the baby Jesus and finally find him, this is an affirmation of universal salvation and helps us reflect on our own journey to our Lord. His manifestation forces us to choose: Will we follow the signs that lead to Him or will we be like those priests and scribes who chose to ignore God's words of promise?

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.

VOLUNTEER & SHARE YOUR GIFTS!

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



The Visit of the Magi

Complete the paragraph by filling in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank at the bottom of the story.



After Jesus was born in _____ in Judea, during the time of King Herod, _____ from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been _____ king of the Jews? We saw his _____ in the east and have come to _____ him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it _____ over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother _____, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of _____ and of _____ and of _____. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Matthew 2: 1-2, 9-12 (NIV)

Bethlehem born	gold incense	Magi Mary	myrrh star	stopped worship
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Adapted from Sermons4Kids.com