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**The “Great  
Doorway” to  
Eternal Life**

Palm Sunday of the  
Passion of the Lord  
5 Apr 2020

Is 50:4-7  
Phil 2:6-11  
Mt 26:14-27:66



“Palm Sunday is the great doorway leading into Holy Week, the week when the Lord Jesus makes his way towards the culmination of his earthly existence. He goes up to Jerusalem in order...to be nailed to the wood of the Cross, the throne from which he will reign forever, drawing to himself humanity of every age and offering to all the gift of redemption.”

– *Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI*

“Palm Sunday is the great doorway leading into Holy Week...” says Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI as he began Holy Week celebrations in 2012.

With the suspension of Masses virtually all over the world since early March to stem Covid-19 transmissions – and even earlier from 15 February in the Singapore Archdiocese, this “great doorway” to the holiest week in the liturgical calendar seems closed to us since we are unable to celebrate the sacraments which are necessary for our salvation (cf CCC 1257). Some of us may wonder if God is shutting himself away from us. For nearly two months now, Sunday Mass and ministry fellowships have gone online. While we are thankful that technology has made these possible, nevertheless, as our Holy Father, Pope Francis, observed in his Extraordinary *Urbi et Orbi* on 27 March, there is a “distressing void...We find ourselves afraid and lost.” He asked if we have built our lives around “false and superfluous certainties...our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities... that anesthetize us with ways of thinking and acting that supposedly

‘save’ us, but instead prove incapable of putting us in touch with our roots.” It was a somber reflection to examine our foundations deeper.

Has God shut this “great doorway” in Holy Week 2020 to all of us? Or is this a more intense time of testing to see if we are still steadfast in faith at this “great doorway” of mercy that will never be shut to the repentant? The Palm Sunday liturgy with its exultant palm procession, the role-playing of the Gospel where we cry “Crucify him!” and the sober, remorseful moment of being on our knees when Christ “yielded up his spirit” (Mt 27:50), all these words and actions compel us at the start of every Holy Week to ask ourselves if we are where we should be – “near the cross” and trusting in God’s mercy and power.

If we are “near the cross”, then we are also at the “great doorway” of Christ’s pierced side. It is the heart of God opened by a lance to pour out new and eternal life on us. It is only by God becoming man in Jesus that eternal life can be transmitted to us. Pope Emeritus tells us that on that first Palm Sunday, Jesus went up to

Jerusalem “towards the culmination of his earthly existence...to be nailed to the wood of the Cross, the throne from which he will reign forever, drawing to himself humanity of every age and offering to all the gift of redemption.” (Palm Sunday, 2012)

St Paul speaks of this astounding sacrifice in today’s second reading, “His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.” (Phil 2:6-8)

Wars, pandemics, natural disasters, political feuds, displaced people – many in the world today are “wearing” (Is 50:4). May the grace that will flow out anew to us at this “great doorway” to Holy Week be shared with others in the manner that our Holy Father has urged on us, “exercising patience and offering hope, taking care to sow not panic but a shared responsibility...Prayer and quiet service: these are our victorious weapons.” (Pope Francis, *Urbi et Orbi*)

## Announcements

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

### CATHOLICNEWS

Grab the latest copy of CatholicNews outside the Parish Office.

### SFX TELEGRAM - FOLLOW US!

Follow us through our official TELEGRAM channel: <https://t.me/sfxchurch>! You will receive the latest official announcements on Parish-wide events/initiatives, reminders, mass timings and the church bulletin on your phone. Telegram is a free app! Information will continue to be availed on our SFX website, Facebook, Instagram and our bulletin "The Manna".

### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available with our priests on **Fri 3 Apr, 5pm - 7pm** and **Sat 4 Apr, 9am - 12pm**. Please contact the Parish Office to make an appointment.

### ONLINE CHILDREN'S MASS

Parents with young children, take note! There is a pre-recorded Children's Mass every **Sun, 8am**. Watch it at online at [www.youtube.com/catholicsg](http://www.youtube.com/catholicsg).

### ONE: EASTER REFLECTION BOOKLET 2020

The Office for the New Evangelisation has produced a booklet of reflections for the season of Easter with the theme "Singing

Alleluia in Communion". The booklet is available outside the Parish Office and online at [tinyurl.com/20easterbooklet](http://tinyurl.com/20easterbooklet).



## HOLY WEEK UPDATES

In view of our escalating Covid-19 situation this week and anticipating further escalation, the government has introduced further physical distancing measures for the community, and a specific directive on comprehensive measures to reduce transmission for religious gatherings.

The Archdiocesan Covid-19 Taskforce has noted these developments:

### Postponement of Chrism Mass and Easter Baptisms

Chrism Mass will be postponed till further notice, pending the public health situation and further advisories from the government. RCIY/RCIA (adult) Baptisms may be celebrated when Masses are resumed in the Archdiocese.

### Easter Triduum

The government expects disease incidence to worsen and has imposed additional measures, including orders for all religious institutions to suspend services as happened in other countries. Hence the earlier recommendations for Masses to be celebrated by priests without a congregation still stands.

### Closure of Churches during Easter Triduum (9 - 12 April 2020)

Churches will be closed during the Easter Triduum through to Easter Sunday, in view of the limit of 10 persons at a venue at any one time. (MCCY Advisory on 26 March 2020)

### SFX MASS COLLECTIONS (CASH/CHEQUE/PAYNOW)

With the indefinite suspension of Masses, income collection has greatly decreased. On top of utilities, staff salaries, etc. our Parish has the renovation to finance. As such, we would like to appeal to parishioners for your continued support. Mass collections can be made via the following options:

- **Cash or Cheque** (made payable to **Church of St. Francis Xavier**). You can hand it to the Parish Office or use envelopes labelled **Mass Collection** and drop it into the Mass Offering Box outside the Parish Office. Envelopes can be found next to the Mass Offering Box. You may mail the cheques to **63A Chartwell Drive S(558758)**.
- **PayNow!**
  1. Launch the **PayNow** Service in your bank's app OR online banking website
  2. Select "**Send via Unique Entity Number (UEN)**"
  3. Key in Parish UEN - **T08CC4033J**
  4. Check Name - **Church of St Francis Xavier**
  5. Key in Amount - **\$XXX**
  6. Key in Ref - **Mass Collection**

### SSVP: DONATIONS FOR FRIENDS IN NEED(FINS)

The poor and needy are still in need of financial assistance during this period of Covid-19. You can issue a cheque to "SSVP NC Singapore" and mail it to **Society of St Vincent de Paul, 7A, Lor 8, Toa Payoh, #04-01, Agape Village, Singapore 319264**. Please give cheerfully and generously so that they can continue to aid our Friends in Need with your donations. To find out more, visit [ssvpsingapore.org](http://ssvpsingapore.org).



### CRUCIS SINGAPURA - VIRTUAL WAY OF THE CROSS

Jesus Youth, an international Catholic lay youth movement, invites you to join "Crucis Singapura" - a virtual Way of the Cross on **Sat 4 Apr at 3pm**. There will be a guided reflection with testimonies, interactive prayers and worship music. A link will be provided upon registration. Register for free on [www.singapore.jesuyouth.org](http://www.singapore.jesuyouth.org) or call 9087 4674/8328 6194 for details.

## *Prayer for Protection Against Coronavirus*

Praise You, Heavenly Father, Almighty Creator of the Universe. You appointed us stewards of all fauna and flora and gave us mastery over them. In so many ways, we have failed you and we ask for your forgiveness.

In these worrisome times, with the global Coronavirus pandemic threatening our health and existence, we humbly and confidently ask for Your protection, healing and restoration, especially of those who are already afflicted with it.

Father, keep safe all medical staff, all who comfort the sick, all border patrol personnel, and all who courageously take up the task of keeping our country and the world safe from this virus.

If it is Your will, bind this plague and take this suffering away from us. Holy Spirit, transform our fears into strength, resilience, steadfastness and fortitude, and help us bear fruits of faith, hope, charity and prudence.

Precious Blood of Jesus, purify the world of this pestilence. Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us. Mother of Perpetual Succour, watch over us and intercede for us. St. Benedict and St. Raphael, pray for us. All our guardian angels, light and guard our way.

In Jesus' Most Holy name we pray. Amen.

## *An inspirational reading plan to refocus on Holy Week during Covid-19*

*This year, as we pause from our regular schedules to slow the spread of Covid-19, let us take the opportunity to allow scriptural passages and Jesus' example to bring us peace in the midst of this crisis. Consider using these passages as a reading guide to adjust your focus on Holy Week and take time to think about the proposed reflection for the day.*

### **DAY 1: PALM SUNDAY**



Matthew 21:1-17  
Mark 11:1-11  
Luke 19:28-48  
John 12:12-36

#### *Reflection*

On Palm Sunday, we remember that Jesus willingly went to Jerusalem in obedience to the Father, knowing that he was on a journey toward the cross. What difficult journey are you on? What steps of obedience do you need to take?

### **DAY 2: HOLY WEEK MONDAY**



Matthew 21:18-26:5  
Mark 11:1-13:36  
Luke 20:1-22:6  
John 12:37-50

#### *Reflection*

On Monday of Holy Week, we remember Jesus' teachings to his disciples, including the greatest command: to love God and our neighbours (Matthew 22:37-40). How can we demonstrate love to God and our neighbours this Holy Week?

### **DAY 3: HOLY WEEK TUESDAY**



Luke 21:37-38;  
Luke 22:39

#### *Reflection*

On Tuesday of Holy Week, we remember that it was Jesus' usual practice to be with his disciples for the purpose of teaching and prayer. How might we follow his example this Holy Week?

### **DAY 4: HOLY WEEK WEDNESDAY**



Matthew 26:6-16  
Mark 14:1-11

#### *Reflection*

On Wednesday of Holy Week, we remember the beautiful example of sacrificial worship demonstrated by the woman who anointed Jesus. Can we offer something as a beautiful sacrifice to Jesus today?



### **DAY 5: HOLY WEEK THURSDAY**



Matthew 26:17-75  
Mark 14:12-72  
Luke 22:7-65  
John 13:18-27

#### *Reflection*

On Maundy Thursday, we remember Judas' betrayal, the disciples' abandonment and Peter's denial. Are there ways we betray, abandon or deny Jesus?

### **DAY 6: GOOD FRIDAY**



Matthew 27:1-66  
Mark 15:1-47  
Luke 22:66-23:56  
John 18:28-19:42

#### *Reflection*

On Good Friday, we remember the sacrifice of Jesus to endure torture and death on a cross. How might we express gratitude to Jesus?

### **DAY 7: HOLY SATURDAY**



Matthew 27:62-66

#### *Reflection*

On Holy Saturday, we remember the disciples as they experienced what they considered to be the silence of God in the midst of their fear. Consider our own need for faith to believe God is at work even when we can't see it.

### **DAY 8: EASTER SUNDAY**



Matthew 28:1-15  
Mark 16  
Luke 24  
John 20:1-29

#### *PRAY*

On Easter Sunday, we celebrate Jesus' resurrection. We pray for God's peace that is now freely available to rule in our hearts all year, no matter what we're facing. He is our living hope!





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



### HOLY FATHER'S PRAYER INTENTIONS THIS MONTH

#### UNIVERSAL: FREEDOM FROM ADDICTION

We pray that those suffering from addiction may be helped and accompanied.

### IN THE MONTH OF MAR 2020

#### CONDOLENCES

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

1. Tan Siew Kim Susie Anne
2. Mary Poh Huay Neo
3. Carvalho Audrey Eliza
4. Sr Clarice Mary Lim

#### BAPTISMS

We welcome:

1. Zheng Zhien Emily

#### Mass Timings

##### WEEKEND MASSES

Suspended until further notice

##### WEEKDAY MASSES

Suspended until further notice

##### MASS ON PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Suspended until further notice

##### HOLY HOUR

Suspended until further notice

#### Opening Hours

##### PARISH OFFICE

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

##### ADORATION ROOM

Temporarily closed

##### LIBRARY

Temporarily closed

##### COLUMBARIUM

7am - 7pm

##### CANTEEN

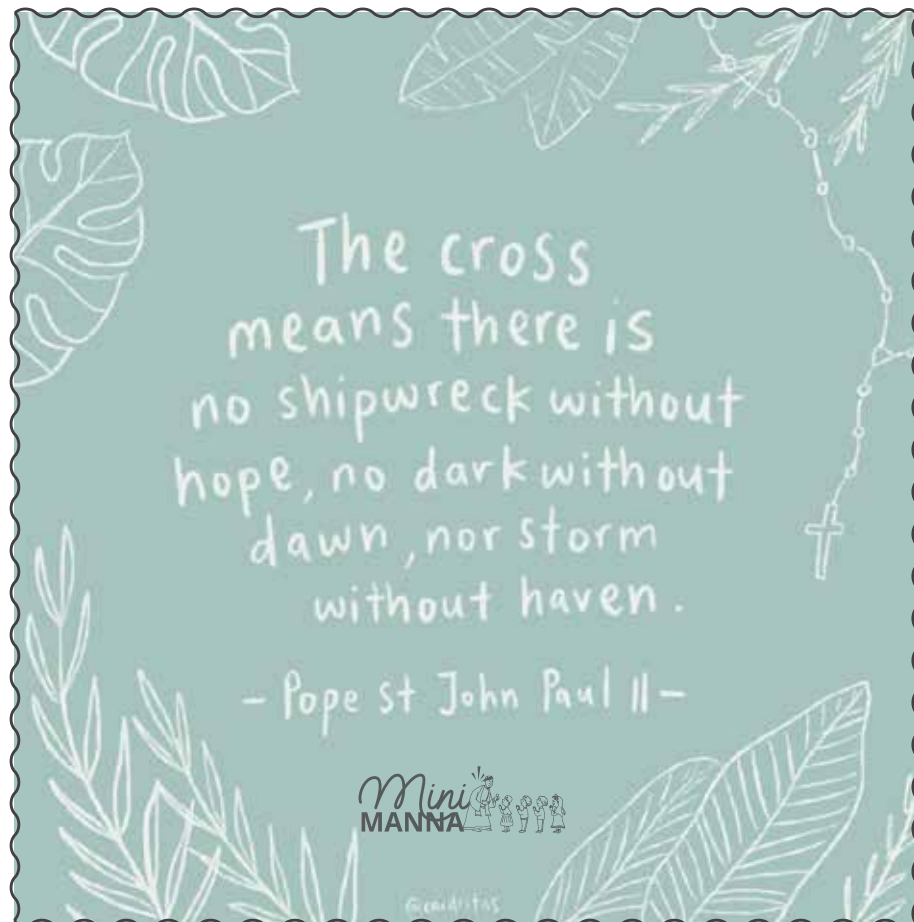
Temporarily closed

## A Beautiful Idea for Palm Sunday

To celebrate Palm Sunday this weekend, let us put a green plant ornament on the door of our house or at the window. It could be any green branch you can get your hands on, or you could try making your very own palm cross. Follow the instructions here: <https://tinyurl.com/DIYPalmCross>



Share with us your creative pieces by tagging us on social media with the hashtag **#SFXPalmSunday!**



#### 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



For more information, please contact the Parish Office for Baptism of Infants.

#### 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](mailto:mmm@sfxchurch.sg)